

ANGLING



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LAKE OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

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ANGLING

IN THE

Lakes of Northern Illinois

HOW AND WHERE TO FISH THEM.

INTERSPERSED WITH NUMEROUS ANECDOTES.

Profusely Illustrated by Descriptive Charts of the Various
Waters of the Fox River Lakes, Showing the
Locations of the Fishing Grounds,
and the Best Method of
Fishing Them.

By CHAS. F. JOHNSON.

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Illinois
Historical
Survey

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CHAPTER I.

SAND LAKE AND SLOUGH LAKE. THE IRISHMAN AND THE COW.

How delightful are the thoughts and reminiscences suggested to the man who fishes by that familiar phrase—"The Lake Region."

For seven long months in the year we toil within a limited horizon of bricks, mortar and smoke, encountering the vexatious worries and hundred and one anxieties incidental to and inseparable from the daily task of dollar hunting, rising early, retiring late, struggling against the vicissitudes of a climate which if appropriated by Hades could render that undesirable abode more undesirable still; in fact, vegetating to all intents and purposes, mechanically following a certain routine of existence, enduring the "Winter of our discontent" with patience and resignation, solely because we are sure of our reward later, and that for five blessed months, viz., June, July, August, September and October, the enchanting fairyland of fishdom can once again be traversed and explored in those beautiful spots familiar to us—"The Lake Region."

My aim in the following series of articles is to describe the numerous lake resorts of Northern Illinois which can be reached on the Wisconsin Central Railway by a short journey, of two to three hours' duration, and a full day's sport enjoyed during that period of time embraced by leaving the city on the Saturday noon train at 1:25 and arriving in Chicago on the Sunday evening following. I know that, although a great number of anglers are already familiar with the fishing grounds of the Fox Lake Region, there are still many would-be

fishermen ignorant of the layout of this delightful locality. It is to these individuals I principally address myself, although not without a lurking hope that the old habitues of the places named will find something of interest also.

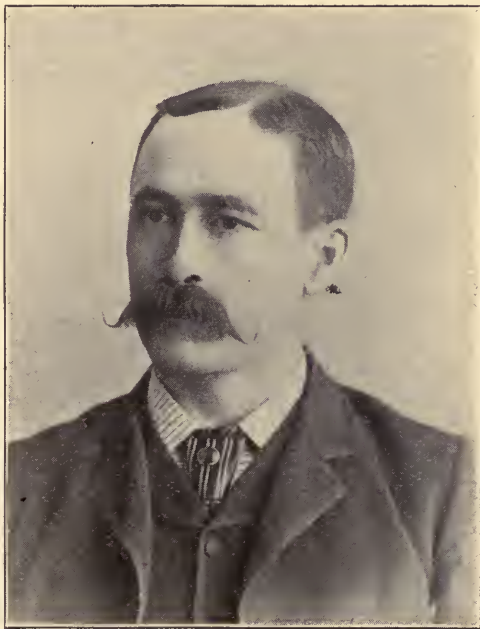
The descriptive charts showing the different formations of the lake bottoms and marginal surroundings, together with the varied finny prey they contain, have been compiled from personal experiences during a series of fishing trips extending over many past years. In addition to this, the description of the different watery territory and the fishes to be found therein, to make assurances doubly sure, have been submitted to the consideration and opinion of those local angling celebrities living in the immediate vicinity, men thoroughly acquainted with every pocket, sandbar, and deep hole; individuals who in many cases have fished the waters from childhood, and whose reliability in these matters is above question.

It is, of course, impossible to show in the accompanying charts the commencement and ends of the boundary lines, within which the several fishing grounds lie, with the absolute exactitude of a professional survey on dry land, but the landmarks and other signs shown in the charts, together with the notes accompanying them, I believe are sufficiently accurate and self-explanatory to enable even a stranger by the exercise of a little care and patience to find any of the spots designated.

To those anglers who indulge in still fishing, I would advise a slight change of "ground" at short intervals until results prove them to be anchored in the best portion of whatever fishing water they may have selected. This is particularly applicable to wall-eyed pike fishing; these fishes, lying in the very deepest parts of the water, make it impossible to locate their "holding ground" from any surface signs, as in the case of pickerel and bass "grounds."

I have noticed there are three classes of fishermen

visiting the lakes and generally making big catches. First is the modern bait-caster, his tools a short, light bait-casting rod, quadruple multiplying reel, and undressed silk casting line, which, when wielded by the expert, enable him to place his frog or minnow in a light, natural manner upon the water, sufficiently far



SMITH WRIGHT, THE WELL-KNOWN SAND LAKE GUIDE AND
EXPERT ANGLER

away to completely conceal from his keen visioned quarry the identity of himself and tackle. This method is the very embodiment of scientific angling, and is undoubtedly the most enjoyable and successful mode of catching fish with hook and line ever introduced.

The man who uses a combination of this description is invariably an enthusiastic and devoted fisherman, for there is no method of angling which can so quickly impart the many secrets of fish and fish lore as does the practice of bait-casting. It commands constant and closest attention to the matter at issue, compelling an undivided observation, which quickly gives that intuitive perception of "desirable environments" and "favorable signs," the knowledge of which is absolutely essential to successful angling.

The second class of lucky fishermen are those old-time habitués of the lakes, whose outfits and methods of using them are of the most crude and simple description, men to whom the modern methods of angling and the innumerable adjuncts to the craft are as a sealed book. Such individuals survey the costly rods and expensive outfits of the up-to-date bait-caster with an air of kindly irony and good-natured forbearance, secretly wondering how the deuce a fellow can be so foolish as to invest fifty or sixty dollars in fishing tackle, when according to their old-fashioned firm conviction a twenty-cent bamboo pole, cotton line, and hook baited with a minnow or frog's leg will enable them to unceremoniously "yank out" fish "ad libitum." Dear, genial old disciples of Izaak; fit representatives of ye ancient angler.

These, equipped with a long, stiff bamboo pole, short, thick line, and spoon or baited hook, will engage the services of some old experienced boatman, who will stealthily row the boat from which they fish just outside some rush or sedge beds, enabling their patrons to display their baits to the fishes lurking within the cover without being seen. Such anglers frequently have remarkable success, owing to the fact that the boatman who rows them is usually some experienced old-timer who, appreciating the timorous disposition of the fishes and knowing every likely fishing spot, is able with a quiet, light movement of the sculls to keep the boat sufficiently far away to insure conceal-

ment of both boat and occupants, and yet allow the fisherman to place his bait within striking distance of the fish.

In this case the angler's success is due entirely to the skill and forethought of the man who rows in knowing where the fishes are and approaching them without the slightest splash or disturbance, allowing the merest angling novice who will sit perfectly still and draw a bait through the water at rod's length to frequently take a catch of fish which will make the expert bait-caster's mouth water with envy; and I will venture to say that every man who fishes in this manner and makes a big catch gives to himself the sole credit thereof, and in his harmless vanity imagines himself to be a wonderfully clever fisherman, little thinking what an important part the other fellow who rowed the boat played in their capture.

The third successful style of fishing is trolling from a boat, rowing slowly along the deeper stretches with a trolling spoon following about seventy or eighty feet behind the boat; and the man who trolls is certainly not to be accused of laziness, for if there is any mode of catching fish with rod and line which keeps a man continually on the move it is that in which the trolling spoon is used.

The group of lakes to which I will first call attention are Sand Lake, Crooked Lake, Fourth or Miltimore Lake, Slough Lake and Hastings Lake, in Lake County, Ill. These are reached from the Lake Villa depot on the Wisconsin Central, a distance of fifty miles from Chicago, and are all located within easy distance of Smith Wright's house, the Sand Lake Hotel, which lies about two miles southeast of the depot. Sand Lake faces the house on the north, its nearest shore within a hundred yards of the front door. Slough Lake is about a quarter of a mile southwest, Crooked Lake a mile northwest, Fourth or Miltimore Lake half a mile south, and Hastings Lake about three-quarters of a mile away north. The reason I have grouped these

lakes together is, they can all be fished with but little traveling, by making Smith Wright's house one's headquarters.

For much of the information regarding the fishing spots on these lakes I am indebted to the kindness and courtesy of Mr. Smith Wright, than whom a more genial fishing companion, right-down good fellow and painstaking host never existed, and any angler visiting these lakes who has the good fortune to make a fishing trip with Smith Wright may mark it as a red-letter day, for he'll surely catch fish, have a royal good time, and obtain much valuable information regarding the sport.

Smith Wright is one of the oldest and most successful bait-casters on the lakes. Fifty years ago his father, George Wright, who died four years ago, purchased from the government the hundred and sixty acres which make part of the present holding, fronting on Sand Lake. During the first twenty years he farmed, but the steadily increasing influx of sportsmen from growing Chicago, who made the house their headquarters when fishing the adjoining lakes, caused the old gentleman to view his farming operations as of secondary importance. He enlarged the house, named it Sand Lake Hotel, and catered to the wants of his city visitors. Within a few years of his death he turned the house and its large patronage over to his son, Smith, who with his estimable wife, the present hostess, now runs the place. The terms are one dollar a day, including boats, and live bait of every description can always be had.

Sand Lake contains as good bass and pickerel grounds as any piece of water in the lake region, and it is asserted by many old settlers that the lake affords nearly as good fishing as it did forty years ago. I am inclined to believe this, for I think it is impossible to ever fish out any body of water which contains so many weed beds as do most of the lakes in this region. Sand Lake has always been known as an uncertain fishing water,

unlike Fourth Lake, which even under the most unfavorable auspices of wind and weather will yield some return to the persevering and patient fisherman. But in Sand Lake it's "all or none." For days together the fishes will remain stolidly indifferent to the most seductive baits and careful fishing, but when they do come



Slough Lake

Sand Lake

on feed they go for the bait with an abandon that allows the fisherman to make a big catch in a very short time.

The lake is fed by springs and the fishes in it, particularly the pickerel, are the gamiest and finest eating that ever sprung a rod or graced the table. It is

a notable fact that pickerel under five pounds' weight are seldom caught in Sand Lake.

The best pickerel "ground" is that marked on the chart south of the deep water sixty-five feet in depth. By anchoring on the weed bed skirting it on the south end, and casting out as far as possible into the deep water beyond and allowing the bait to sink well before drawing slowly in, is the best method of fishing this spot. A golden rule and one which often marks the distinguishing line between success and failure is: "Don't reel in too quickly." Stop reeling every now and then, giving by a movement of the rod's point those little hesitatory jerks and seductive movements to the bait which are so enticing to the fish.

The shallow water in the southeast, in shore, affords excellent fly-fishing for bass on a still evening, after a hot day. It is hard bottomed, with a fringe of weeds extending to within fifty yards of the shore line, and is capital wading ground.

The rocky bottomed ground, in shore, opposite the school house, is excellent water for the fly, while farther out and in the deeper water, over toward the sand, live bait can be used to advantage. For early morning and midday fishing the lily pads on the west end of the lake are the best spots.

Although the bait-caster may turn up his nose in disdain at the mere mention of perch fishing, there are still many who enjoy a catch of these toothsome and plucky little fellows. The "ground" marked on the southwestern point of the sandbar will be found to yield the man who fishes for perch all the fun he could reasonably wish; for, unlike the bass and pickerel in this lake, perch will be found always hungry and ready to grab the baited hook dropped for their notice.

Just outside the little rush bed east of T. Donnelly's house is a sure find for large bass at almost any time, but the limited extent of this ground forbids any great catch.

Slough Lake affords good fishing all around in shore.

Both pickerel and bass are fairly plentiful. This lake is something like Sand Lake in regard to the feeding habits of the fishes. But large catches are often made. It is a good plan after making the round of the lake (which is small) and finding no sport, to leave it and try some other lake.

There is a very large pickerel in this lake still, for which the late Mr. George Wright offered any angler who could capture it fifty dollars. Although it has frequently been seen, no angler ever has been able to induce it to take a bait.

Two years ago an Irishman, fresh from the old sod, spending a week's holiday at Wright's house, heard of this big fellow and declared his intention of attempting to catch him. The boys, before he started, in pure waggery, narrated such wonderful yarns as to the length, weight and breadth of this fish that the Irishman was pretty well prepared to see almost any kind of water monstrosity.

He set out at five o'clock in the evening, equipped with a clothes prop, ten yards of chalk line treble braided, two chub minnows for bait weighing respectively two and three pounds each, and an old shark hook that had been kicking about in Wright's odds and ends box for many years. He returned at 5:30 minus his hat, coat and tackle, rushed into the house and incoherently besought Mrs. Wright:

"For the love of the saints give me a stimulant, quick!"

It took nearly all the contents of Wright's medicine chest to fix him up sufficiently to stand, and then all he could do was to yell at the top of his voice:

"I've seen it! I've seen it! I've seen it!"

After he had imparted this information for about ten minutes, without varying it, Wright got impatient and shaking him roughly, asked him:

"What the dickens have you seen, anyhow?"

"I've seen either the big pickerel or the devil," he at last managed to blurt out, during a lucid interval, and

"for Hiven's sake take me home immediately, for I feel that a place where such goings on happen is no place for me." Smith harnessed up the rig and landed him down to the depot in time to catch the train which left an hour later.

The next morning one of the boys who went to Slough Lake found an old dead cow on its back, stuck fast in the mud, close by the Irishman's boat, with its legs sticking above the water about a foot.

The death agonies of an old cow, stuck fast in the mud in two feet of water, as seen in the dim twilight by a superstitious Irishman, are apt to produce such effects that Smith Wright ought to have congratulated himself he didn't have a raving lunatic on his hands instead of a badly frightened Irishman.

CHAPTER II.

FOURTH OR MILTIMORE LAKE. MY FIRST CATFISH.

Fourth or Miltimore Lake, located half a mile south of Sand Lake Hotel, is undoubtedly the best fishing lake of any in the Fox Lake region. It is practically two lakes divided by a spit of land with a narrow channel joining them. During a dry spell this channel dries up and the upper and lower portions of Fourth Lake really become two separate pieces of water without any connecting waterway.

Fourth Lake, from its location and diversified surroundings, offers finer fishing water for the angler and better facilities for success during those unfavorable times when fish are off feed than can be found in any other sheet of water with which I am acquainted. It is rare, indeed, for the man who fishes Fourth Lake during those months comprised in the ordinary fishing season to have an entirely blank day; patient research invariably will reveal some pocket or corner at one end or another of the lake which will yield a few bass or pickerel.

The surroundings of Fourth Lake are such as to permit of a lee shore, no matter in which direction the wind may blow. At the lower end of the lake a chilly wind may cool the water and roughen its surface with heavy waves, sending the fish into the deeper portions far away from the angler's reach, yet the water at the upper or north end will be found to have experienced no change of temperature, owing to the protecting influence of the wooded ground surrounding it. In fact, it may be generally said of Fourth Lake that if the fish are not feeding in one portion they are pretty sure to do so in another.

The two finest pickerel grounds in the lake are those

marked A and B on the chart. In the former the fishing is at its best late in the season, about October and November, at which time a perch tail, used near the surface, is the most killing bait. The appearance of this piece of water is indicative of its excellence. From four to ten feet in depth; skirted on its north side by an extensive rush bed, thence gradually deepening as it opens out into the lake; the bottom studded with a rich growth of pickerel and bass weeds, sufficiently thick to afford concealment to the fishes without seriously impeding the angler in casting his bait and landing the fish when hooked.

The bay marked B on the chart is an excellent pickerel ground at all times and I believe, from my own experience, contains more and larger pickerel than any other spot in the lakes. There are several pickerel frequenting this bay whose weight would be a surprise to the angler who might be so fortunate as to catch one of them.

The bass ground marked C, just west of the boat house, is very fine; the best bass fishing is just within the outer edge of the rushes. There are several pockets, well inside the rushes along the whole of this portion of the north shore, which are worth particular attention on the part of the angler.

Recollect, in boat fishing, to use the sculls as little as possible; drift all you can. The proper and most successful way to fish a piece of water is to row to the windward, keeping well out and away from the water you intend to fish, and then drift over it, taking care to sit still and avoid rocking the boat, for you cannot be too cautious and careful when fishing for large bass.

The best spots at which to fly-fish for bass are those marked D, just outside the rushes. Lake fly-fishing for bass is not a pronounced success. The best fly-fishing for bass is to be had on the riffles of streams with rapid currents; but there are times when even lake fishing for bass with the artificial fly will insure a big catch. Seven years ago I had such a catch in Sand Lake, on



that portion of the water marked as suitable for fly-fishing, and as there may be some enthusiastic votaries of the fly-rod among the readers of the American Field, I will here give a few hints relative to fishing for bass with the fly. They are clipped from a small pamphlet I prepared in 1893, on behalf of the Natchaug Silk Co. for distribution by them during the World's Columbian Exposition. As I have since had no cause to modify my ideas relating to bass fishing with the fly, I will reproduce them here:

"The bass takes the fly at from six to nine inches beneath the surface of the water. Repeat your cast until you get the fly over the desired spot, then allow it to fall delicately upon the water. Let the fly sink to the desired depth. Then, elevating the tip of the rod, by a series of short, hesitatory jerks bring the fly toward you. On feeling a slight resistance strike smartly. The fly must light on the water without commotion and with the least possible ripple.

"While the fly is sinking the bass has opportunity to investigate it; by the time the motion of the rod is given to the fly the bass is anxious to seize it, and, perhaps, is caught almost before the angler knows it.

"Small bass you can catch in almost any bungling manner, but large bass must be kept in complete ignorance of yourself, rod and line, otherwise you will seldom catch them. Small fry in disporting themselves do so without excessive violence. A frog in taking to the water does so in a quiet, easy manner, marking his submersion with a light splash devoid of any violent agitative action; a small water-snake, alarmed in the act of swimming upon the surface, disappears almost silently.

"Everything obeys the laws of Nature. So perfectly do bass recognize these laws that any line placed before them in a manner foreign to that which their instincts accept will be eyed with suspicion and left alone.

"Seat yourself by the pleasant waterside and learn these lessons from Nature. The study will well repay.

Do not make fishing all mechanical work, combing the river from dawn till dark; investigate the wonderful watery world in which fishes so strangely have their being; learn there from reliable data which will assist you in their capture. In wading, avoid splashing the water or any violent, hasty movement; advance stealthily from one point to another. Should there be a slight deposit of mud over a hard bottom, lift the feet carefully straight up from the bottom; this will prevent the water in your vicinity from becoming muddy.

"Bass have a keen sight, and are easily alarmed, hence let the angler seize every advantage of natural cover; the projecting corners of banks, sedge beds, sudden bends and the like afford opportunities for approaching unawares. Do not forget to sink the fly well; the deeper the fly is in the water, the deeper the bass will be when he seizes it, therefore the less chance he has of seeing you and discovering the method of its presentation; about nine inches is usually as deep as a fly can sink and clear the bottom growth of weeds.

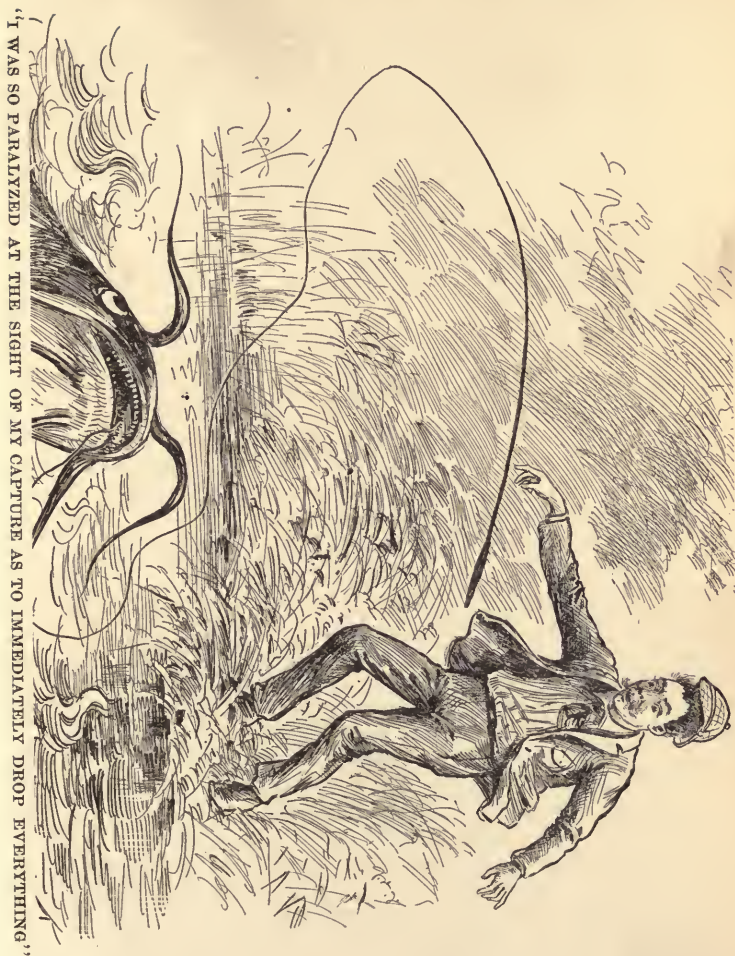
"Do not be too anxious to recover the fly from the water. Bring it toward you slowly, without undue haste, interposing its progress with slight momentary pauses. Thus a not over-hungry bass is given a chance to seize it; whereas, if pulled too quickly, a 'short rise' will be the result.

"Now a few words as to those portions of a water in which to fish. Ignorance on this matter will render the best flies and the utmost proficiency in using them of little avail. All waters have certain portions particularly adapted as holding ground for bass, and other parts where bass are seldom or never found. Waste no time in fishing those dark deeper portions bordered with sedge and clear muddy bottom. Fish places with hard, irregular and rocky bottoms, here and there dotted with a sufficient deposit of mud to encourage a straggling growth of that variety of water grass which seldom grows quite tall enough to appear above the surface. This is a desirable formation, being sufficiently

dense to afford to fishes cover and secrecy, without seriously impeding their movements."

That bane of the angler—the dogfish—will be met with pretty frequently in Fourth Lake. How annoying it is to have one's hopes raised by an unusually heavy strike, followed by a period of hard play, only to have the supposed big bass turn out an enormous dogfish. Speaking of dogfish reminds me of the first dogfish I ever captured, many, many years ago.

It was on the Little Calumet River a little below Miller's, and a momentous trip it was for me, being the first time I had ever gone fishing in downright earnest, and I knew very little about it. My tackle consisted of a light rod, fine casting line, and small Limerick hook, baited with a bunch of juicy squirming worms. I had hardly cast my line into the water before I experienced such a determined, regular come-along, business-like pull as to make me wonder what the dickens had happened. I became dimly aware of hooking something, but what it was couldn't give the slightest guess. Then commenced a full fifteen minutes' strong battle between something which, while resisting all my efforts to raise it from the bottom, made a ceaseless, steady detour of the deep pool before me. At the expiration of this period of time it evidently thought a little rest would be acceptable, for without further ado it quietly rested upon the bottom, and the utmost tension I desired to exert with my light tackle failed to shift it in the slightest, so I placed the rod upon the ground, and after a little search found a snake-rail fence; from this I took a rail about thirty-five feet long, and succeeded in reaching sufficiently far into the water to dislodge my captive and send him careering around the pool again. After a short period he rested again, and again I prodded him into action with the rail. For about four hours this circus went on; it was fifteen minutes' action and five minutes for recreation, alternately, until I began to wonder whether such a



"I WAS SO PARALYZED AT THE SIGHT OF MY CAPTURE AS TO IMMEDIATELY DROP EVERYTHING."

protracted test of endurance would not end in tiring myself out instead of my captive.

At last, the great unknown apparently shook off the apathetic behavior which had hitherto characterized his actions and began to show signs of irritability, leaving the bottom and coming to about mid-water, evidently making frantic efforts to get free from the hook. The water was so muddy that although on one occasion, by an unusually daring strain on the tackle, I nearly succeeded in forcing him to the top, yet I could not gain the slightest glimpse of my prize or form any opinion as to its identity.

The fighting now became fast and furious; no more sulking, but a continuous, rapid, steady movement around and across the pool until, at last, the supreme moment arrived when, the prize lying directly under me, I prepared to bring him to the surface. Inch by inch, carefully I coaxed him, my expectations raised to such a pitch that I fairly trembled. At last it showed up, the enormous open trap of a huge, gasping, fagged-out old catfish, thirty pounds in weight.

I was so paralyzed at the sight of my captive as to immediately drop everything, and if the fish had not been so thoroughly tuckered-out with its previous efforts, I would have lost him before regaining my nerve and the landing-net. However, when I did so, to land him was an easy matter, and I took him away back from the water's edge, and there pondered earnestly and long as to what the dickens kind of a fish it could be. I had had enough fishing for that day, so I packed up and started to go home, taking the Lake Shore tracks as the shortest way.

About half a mile down the tracks I came across a gang of section hands at work; they were all Swedes excepting the foreman, who was a German and the only man speaking the American language. I knew most of these men by sight and was on pretty intimate terms with the foreman.

"IT'S A DOGFISH—WHY, YOU CAN'T EAT THAT THING!"



"Been fishing, Mr. Johnson?" he asked. "Had any luck?"

"Well," I said, "I hardly know. I have got a fish in this bag, but what it is or if it is good to eat I cannot tell."

A look of covetous surprise went around the group when I exhibited my fish, and the foreman, after recovering from his astonishment at the sight of so big a fish, remarked, indifferently:

"Well, I guess you had better bury that fish right away."

"Bury it!" I exclaimed, "why, isn't it good to eat?"

"Good to eat!" he answered. "Good for nothing! Why it's a catfish, and deadly poison!"

I was sadly disappointed at this intelligence and was turning dejectedly away, when the foreman hailed me, saying:

"Here, Johnson, I tell you what I'll do; that fish has got an uncommon fine head, and would look well mounted, I'll give you a dime for it!"

"Here's the fish," I said, "I don't want your dime; I'm glad you saved me the trouble of carrying it two miles farther in the hot sun!"

It was two days after that when I heard what a scrumptious fish supper the gang had eaten at my expense, and for the next few days I could never pass the gang of section hands without a broad grin displaying itself upon the features of the Swedes, and hearing a bantering inquiry from the foreman as to whether I was going fishing or had another catfish to sell.

However, I made up my mind to get a catfish, and one morning—rigged up with a strong pole and suitable tackle—found me again at the same pool. I fished hard all day and was about giving up in disgust when, sure enough, I had a good strong bite, but nothing to compare with my previous one. After about ten minutes' fight I landed him and this time it was a long, snaky looking fish with small wicked eyes, weighing

about eight pounds and looking something like a pickerel, but I knew it wasn't a pickerel. Triumphantly I bore my prize away, down the track, until I met the section gang. Every one of them suspended work immediately I arrived, and clustered around with great interest.

"Well, I'll be goldarned if Johnson ain't been and got a big dogfish this time," the foreman exclaimed.

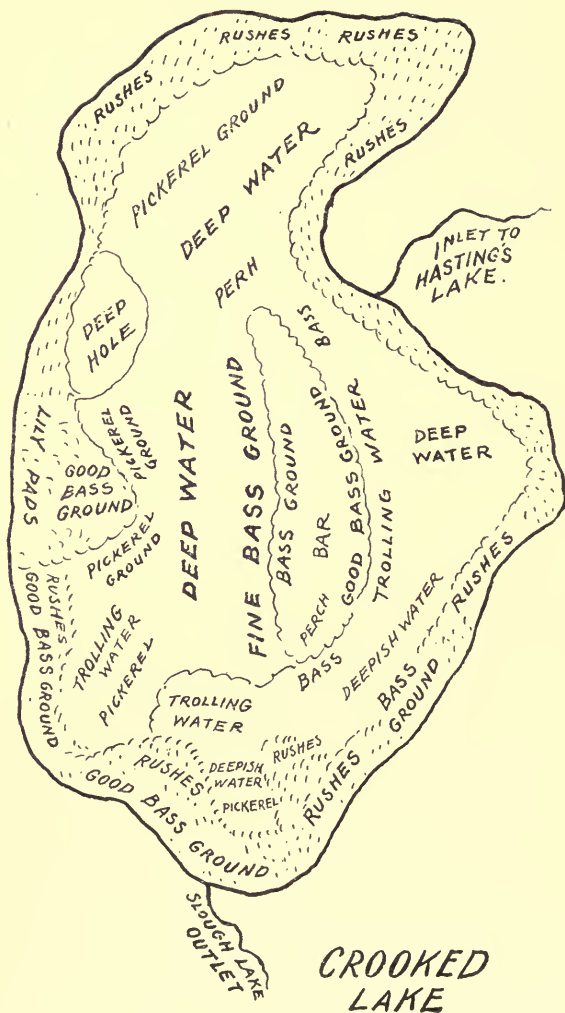
"A what?" I asked, in indignant protest.

"It's a dogfish, sure, and the rottenest kind of fish that swims; why, you can't eat that thing!"

"Come, now," I exclaimed, getting angry, "this is too stale; here, the first fish I showed you you tell me is a catfish, unfit to eat, yet you fellows have the treat of your lives making a supper off it, and now you think you can kid me again. Not much! But, now see here, boys, you can't do it, for this fish, no matter what kind of a fish it is, a dogfish, cowfish, horsefish, or any blarsted animal fish you like to call it, no matter what funny name you like to give, I'll take that fish home, cook and eat a couple of pounds of it if I die five minutes afterward. No, no!" I muttered, as I shouldered my fish and walked away, "you 'conned' me once, but you can't work that old game on me again."

When I arrived at my bachelor establishment, I cut a good, generous three-pound steak from the shoulder of the fish, boiled it and on principle made the fish gorge of my life. For the next two weeks the medical gentleman from the nearest town called regularly at "Johnson's shack," as my little frame house was called; and, during that time, the many neighbors who came to inquire how I was progressing never got further than the door—the everlasting retching which greeted their ears leaving them in doubt as to whether Johnson was in the last throes of hydrophobia or relinquishing his intestines piecemeal.

CROOKED LAKE.



CHAPTER III.

CROOKED LAKE. O'LEARY'S GOOSE.

I have asked several persons who are supposed to know:

"Why is Crooked Lake so named? With the exception of one man, everybody I asked unhesitatingly answered:

"Because it's so crooked, of course."

The exception referred to was, I think, the only truthful one of my informants, for after pondering deeply for a few moments he turned around and frankly admitted he did not know and, furthermore, not feeling interested, didn't care a bean. Personally, I do not think Crooked Lake takes its name from the irregularity of its shore lines, for if this was the case nearly every lake, with few exceptions, that I know would have to be called Crooked Lake also.

Many, many years ago, when I was a young fellow of seventeen, during a tour in Switzerland I made the acquaintance of a young German named Muller, a devil-may-care young student, just fresh from the university; we became great chums, clubbed our slender finances, and for two months traveled together and became inseparable. He was the most rollicksome, beer bibbing, aggressive mortal it ever has been my lot to meet, yet, withal, an unassuming, gentle-hearted creature, incapable of knowingly hurting a fly.

During this trip we cudgeled our brains to devise the most absurd legendary lore regarding the many points of scenic interest in which the country is so prolific. Did a tall, jutting rock of some peculiarly striking shape require a name and befitting history we supplied it. Did some particularly monstrous chasm in our opinion lay claim to special importance,

we gratified it, in most cases interweaving a chain of events portraying the proverbial love-lorn beautiful damsel, the despairing lover and the wicked villain, ending with a tableau of tragic action in which the point of interest found a conspicuous part. With assiduous perseverance we traced back to the darkest ages the why and the wherefore of the many sights of interest to the tourist, supplying data, romance, the supernatural and blood-curdling historic events "secundum artem;" and in those cases (which were extremely numerous) where authentic information failed, supplying the deficiency from our imaginations.

We flooded the smaller journals with our communications on this subject; and, as the old adage says, "In throwing mud some sticks," so it was in this case; although most of the older and more experienced papers refused to accept our versions, still many of the smaller ones gave credence to our fairy tales and circulated much information which became accepted, and has since been embodied in many of the guide books of the locality. I remember at the time we both considered ourselves public benefactors and entitled to the thanks and general homage of the Swiss public at large.

I have no doubt if my friend Muller was now on hand he could, without greatly discommoding his inventive faculties, invest the various waters of the lake region with an amount of interesting legendary lore, possibly of the Hiawathian kind, which, although it might give rise to much discursive comment and surprise among the older residents, would still have to be received in silence because of their inability to contradict it. At any rate, I am confident that if young Muller was only on hand and given half a chance in this matter, I should not have to confess my inability to furnish any interesting history regarding the derivation of the names of the various waters which I am to mention in these articles

Crooked Lake affords very fine pickerel, perch and

bass fishing. Its general characteristics regarding sport are something like those of Sand Lake, either big catches of large fishes or a total blank, but unlike Sand Lake in this respect—the blank days are not nearly so frequent.

The best bass ground is that in the deepish water on both sides of the bar, and even when the bass are feeding in a desultory fashion and lacking vim in biting in other portions of the lake, the ground surrounding



“THAT DHOUL OF A BHURD WAS HARDER
THAN ROCK ITSELF”

the bar will generally be found to yield a fish or two if perseveringly coaxed. The lily pads on the east side of the lake contain very large bass, and that spot is splendid evening fishing.

Minnows, frogs and artificial baits all have their respective admirers, but I am convinced from personal experience the ground around the bar will yield bigger catches to the angler who uses minnows than any other

bait, artificial or otherwise. For fishing the deeper reaches of any water minnows are unquestionably the best bait, and I think the next best all-round bait is a spoon and pork rind. With a minnow the angler can dwell on his cast, allowing the bait to make short periodical stops during its progress through the water, thus giving a not over hungry fish the opportunity to seize it; but with the spoon and pork rind the lure has to be kept on the move all the time, otherwise its alluring powers—the spin—are wanting. The most killing shape in which to cut a pork rind is to take a strip about two and one-half inches long and one inch wide, cut a forked fish tail in one end and similar forks toward the center, one on each side of the strip, and trim the remainder to one-half inch in width; then insert one of the treble hooks in the narrow end. This size is about right to use upon a No. 4 Skinner spoon.

This bait is a most killing lure for both bass and pickerel; the pendant tails of the pork rind dangling and swaying when drawn through the water, in a particularly seductive and enticing manner. In many instances a fish, when not feeding well, particularly after a protracted cold spell toward the end of the season, will refuse to pursue the too quickly receding artificial bait, when the same fish would seize a minnow which lingers sufficiently long in its vicinity to allow of its being mouthed without too much exertion.

In fact, with all predatory fishes, unless they are feeding freely, the more leisurely the bait is drawn through the water the better are the chances of catching them.

The nearer the temperature of the atmosphere to that of the water the better fishes feed. If the air is chilly, providing the water is the same, sport may be had; if the water is warm, the atmosphere should be warm also. After a continued spell of hot weather the water becomes thoroughly warmed and the advent of a cold wind or cooler temperature will cause the fishes to cease feeding as though by magic. During a hot spell

the more humidity there is in the atmosphere the better fish take the bait. The moon unquestionably exercises a great influence on the feeding habits of fish. As the moon approaches its full fish display less inclination to feed during the day, and as the moon wanes fish will be found to give better sport to the angler.

Through the warmer months fish will seize a bait nearer the surface than during the colder ones, and after the first spell of chilly weather, generally about the latter end of October or commencement of November, the bait must be sunk deeper in the water to ensure its being taken.

No living thing is so susceptible to the immediate influence of heat and cold as a fish. Change of temperature will at once influence its feeding humor. Fishes are cold-blooded and it takes heat to stir them into activity, whereas cold engenders torpidity and inaction with less desire for food.

One of the oldest and most familiar frequenters of Crooked Lake is Cook County Commissioner James Munn, who has taken probably more large catches from its water than any other angler living. It was while fishing Crooked and the surrounding lakes that Mr. Munn first conceived the idea of the weedless hook which now bears his name. I know that many anglers have an antipathy to a weedless hook, on general principles, but there is, unquestionably, excellent fishing water in the lake region, teeming with large fishes, which it would be impossible to fish without a weedless hook; and my experience of the Munn weedless is that it allows a man to make big catches in such places which would be inaccessible to the ordinary unguarded hook.

I had an aunt once, an Irish lady who by some means or another had slipped into our family before I was born. Her name was Fatima O'Dowd, a jovial, dear, good-humored old lady, possessing a rich brogue and an extensive unentailed estate in North Donegal. Without intentional disrespect, we boys and, in fact, all the

family, had dropped into the habit of alluding to her as "Aunt Fatty," and although this nickname described the dear old soul's appearance pretty accurately, yet she was never offended at the nickname. I never see Crooked Lake without thinking of a piece of water—the very counterpart of Crooked Lake in size, shape and surroundings—upon Aunt Fatty's Irish domain, filled with the finest lot of large pickerel I have ever seen.

Dear old Aunt Fatty, she is dead and gone now many, many years, and among her many peculiarities was that of not allowing any game to be killed upon the estate, or a fish to be taken from the river and lake upon the estate. Yet she was the warmest-hearted and most charitable landowner in Ireland, and during many a severe Winter it would have gone hard with her tenants if Aunt Fatty had not grub-staked them. Every New Year's Day she would drive around to her tenants and ask them which they preferred, a pair of ducks or a goose, for their New Year's present. She invariably gave them one or the other at this period of the year.

I recollect one year every tenant wanted a goose, and how to raise sixty geese was a problem which sadly puzzled her on her homeward journey; so when on reaching home one of the girls told her Andy O'Leary was below, waiting to see her about some geese he was wanting to sell, down she went, right away, to interview him.

"Shure, Mrs. O'Dowd," said Andy, "it's some fat geese ye'll be after wanting for your New Year's prisintations?"

"Yes, I do," said Aunty; "sixty birds."

"Sixty bhurds, is it?" Andy echoed; "why, shure, Ma'am, its jist the selfsame amount I'm after offering; every blessed bhurd as tender as a colleen's conscience and plump and foinc-looking as your own swate silf; and," added Andy, sinking his voice to a confidential whisper, "the price to you is only a shilling apiece, but

for hiven's sake don't mintion it to a living body; shure they'd boycott me, every mother's son, for asking less than two shillings a bhurd!"

Knowing Andy to be a pretty reliable fellow in bargains of this kind, after some little talk Aunt



"AND ERECTED A MOUND TO HIS MEMORY"

consented to take the birds, and Andy went away happy with instructions to kill, draw and deliver the geese to the tenants and call up at the big house a week later for his money.

It was about two weeks afterward that one of the tenants, Mrs. McCarty, called to see Aunty on some affair of trifling import and Aunty casually asked her

how she had enjoyed her New Year's goose. At this query Mrs. McCarty became terribly embarrassed.

"By all the saints in hiven, Ma'am," she replied, "'tis an onmintionable subject in our house; and the tough unholy baste lies this minit on the top shelf of the cabin, unaten."

"Why, you surprise me," said Auntie, "for Andy O'Leary assured me his geese were all young and tender!"

"Andy O'Leary!" screeched Mrs. McCarty; "and is it to that murthering rascal I'm risponsible for me throuble? Why, Mrs. O'Dowd, Ma'am, begging your ladyship's humble pardon for spaking of it, I boiled that blaggard of a goose for one whole night and two blissed days, before ever so much as the prong of a fork could make a dent on his leathery old carcass; and it's roasted and well basted before a slow fire it was for jist another day, by little Mickey; and then I thought, 'surely 'tis tinder and atable the bhurd should be now!' But, Mrs. O'Dowd, dear, thrue as I'm shstanding here in your prisinee, that dhoul of a bhurd was harder than rock itsilf! Wasn't it me husband who at-timpted to gnaw a bite of mate from the terrible thing and broke off short the only three teeth in his face; and wasn't it little Mickey, who's now at home wid his jaw cracked and me best woolen scarf round his innercent little skull to keep his little face straight at all, at all, because the unthinking little gossoon imagined he could chate the bhurd's leg of a bite of grissle? Oh, Mrs. O'Dowd, 'tis sorra the day you prisinted me wid that garralikin of a bhurd!"

As Auntie had received no complaints from the other tenants, she felt sure that some mistake had been made by Andy, and finally persuaded Mrs. McCarty to go over to Andy's cabin and find out the facts of the case; at the same time counseling her to make the necessary inquiries in a peaceable and neighborlike manner.

Mrs. McCarty started on her errand and soon arrived

at the O'Leary residence, where she was welcomed in the most cordial manner by Mrs. O'Leary and informed that Andy was not at home. After the first greetings were over and a little preliminary chat had been broached, Mrs. McCarty came straight to the matter in hand.

"Mrs. O'Leary," she said, putting on her most persuasive smile and best company manners, "Oi would loike to know where Andy found that devil of a goose he left at my cabin two weeks ago?"

"Shure, darlint, I'll tell you," the other replied, "'twas old Patsy; me husband, the Lord forgive him, killed the bhurd by mistake, and 'tis mesilf that haven't done crooning and lamenting for the loss of my old favorite yet!"

"Old Patsy!" ejaculated Mrs. McCarty; "who's old Patsy?"

"Why, Mrs. McCarty, dearie, 'tis yoursilf that's aware me maiden name was Patsy before I married that unthinking gossoon, Andy O'Leary; and, bedad, 'tis thrue that Patsy and I were gossoons together. Me father prisinted me wid the bhurd for a playmate whin I was jist a year old, and I'm jist sixty-three years this coming Michaelmas!"

"Holy Katie!" yelled Mrs. McCarty; "tell me, is it thrue I attempted to cuke and ate a goose sixty-three years old?"

"Indade and 'tis," sorrowfully acquiesced her old neighbor; "sorra the day such a terrible mishtake happened. But, Mrs. McCarty, darlint, shure ye can sympathize wid me loss. I know ye have never aten the poor, stringy old darlint; send me his ramanes, if 'tis only his bones, and take a sorrowing lone woman's blissing and the fattest and best goose in the pig-stye home wid yees!"

The upshot of the matter was, Mrs. McCarty departed with a plump green goose, and well satisfied with her old neighbor's explanation. Old Patsy's re-

mains were duly forwarded to the disconsolate Mrs. O'Leary, who buried her defunct favorite behind the cabin and erected a mound to his memory.

CHAPTER IV.

CEDAR LAKE. TUBBY'S SECOND RUN. A PATRIOTIC LOBSTER.

There are some persons of so peculiarly receptive temperament that, once an idea finds lodgment in their brain, it remains to the utter exclusion of everything else. Cedar Lake is always associated in my mind with such an individual. His name was Percy Reginald Plantaganet Tubbs. It follows without saying that an individual bearing so luxuriant an appendage of given names was of British extraction. According to his own version he was a dark, dark, blue-blooded aristocrat, tracing a direct lineal descent from King Alfred of burnt cake renown; but according to the report of his bosom friend and fellow refugee, Jimmy Smith, Tubbs, or Tubby as we always called him, was the result of a common-law marriage between a Billingsgate fish girl and a Shoreditch bogle jerker, or in other words, one of those industrious individuals indigenous to all large cities, who find pocketbooks before they are lost.

However, it is not of Tubbs' pedigree I would speak, but rather of his angling exploits. The first time I fished Cedar Lake I took Tubby with me, intending to initiate him into the mysteries of pickerel fishing.

The first day I had to run over to Waukegan on business. But, before doing so, I took Tubby down to the lake, rigged him out with suitable tackle, and a big bob float beneath which dangled an unusually large, lively chub. My principal instruction to Tubby was the following:

"When a pickerel takes the bait, let him have it until he makes the second run; then strike him! But, on

no account, strike him until he does make the second run."

After fixing him up all right and telling him what time to expect me back, in the evening, I jumped into the buggy and was about to start, when away went Tubby's big float with a terrific rush, evidently tugged at by a large fish. On looking at my watch I found there was barely time to catch my train, so calling to Tubby to remember my directions, and on no account to strike until the fish made the second run, I drove away.

It was late in the evening when I returned to the hotel and Tubby had not come in from the lake. I called a couple of the boys and we hurried off to the spot at which I had left Tubby in the morning. There, in the gathering gloom, we found him, eagerly watching his rod, with rapt attention, oblivious to everything around.

"Hallo, Tubby, old man, any luck?" I asked.

"How the bloody blazes do I know yet?" he answered pettishly.

"Well, old chap," I said; "if after fishing for fourteen mortal hours in one spot, you are unable to answer my query, you must be a bird of a fisherman."

"Oh, rats!" he jerked out, "the blarsted fish ain't made his second run yet!"

"What!" I roared, in amazement; "do you seriously mean to say this is the same bite I left you with this morning?"

"Course it is," he replied.

We took a boat and by the aid of a lamp followed the line through the weeds (for to budge it an inch by the hardest pulling we found to be impossible), until we ultimately reached the spot at which the line terminated in a large bunch of weeds, weighing about a hundredweight. This we lifted into the boat and rowed ashore, where we commenced to examine it. There, in the very center of the weedy mass, was Tubby's hook, and attached to it the gills only of what had recently

been an enormous pickerel, which, judging from the size of the relic on the hook, must have weighed at least thirty pounds; but where the rest of the fish was the Lord, or more correctly speaking the turtles, only know.

Cedar Lake is reached from Lake Villa Depot, on the



"EAGERLY WATCHING HIS ROD, WITH RAPT ATTENTION"

Wisconsin Central, is a trifle over fifty miles from Chicago, and affords excellent bass and pickerel fishing. The fishing in Cedar Lake is at its best during September and October.

The deep pickerel hole marked A on the chart contains large fishes, but I have never had much success fish-

ing in the deep water, but rather on the "ground" adjoining the deep water and leading to the fringe of weeds north of the deep hole. I am of the opinion that large pickerel, when they retire to the deep waters, do so for privacy and concealment, and are not in a feeding humor. The shallow pocket north of the island is one of the best bass grounds for evening fishing in the lake.

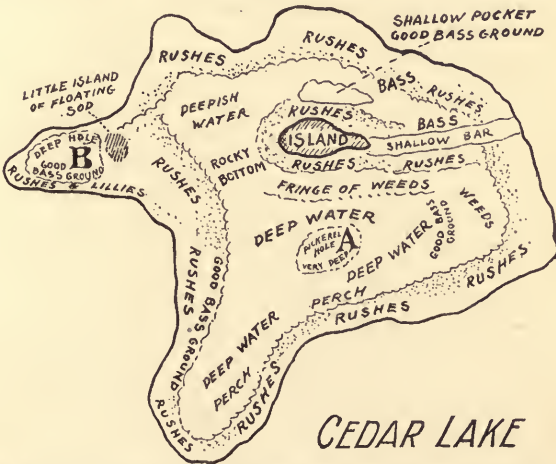
The rocky bottom between the island and the rush bed on the west point of the island will at times yield fairly good sport to the fly fisherman, small and medium-sized bass being very plentiful. It is rarely that fly-fishing for bass is productive of large fishes, half a pound to three-quarters, with an occasional pounder; but the sport that can be enjoyed with a half-pound bass upon the fly-rod is fully equal to that of a two-pounder upon the bait-casting rod. Of course, the smaller bass should be returned to the water, and nobody who claims to be a sportsman would think of retaining a bass under a pound weight (unless the fish is so injured as to render its living uncertain), and this is small enough in all conscience.

A very fine bass ground for early morning and late evening fishing is that off the weed bed on the east end of the lake, and thence around the southern shore of the island. This stretch of fishing ground, if fished carefully when the bass are feeding there, will generally give the angler a big catch.

I have generally found frogs to be the best bait for evening fishing in Cedar Lake, on those bass grounds adjoining the shore line.

The deep hole on the northeast spur, marked B, is another excellent bass ground. The fishes come out to feed in the shallower water surrounding it. The finest catch of bass I have ever seen taken by an individual angler, from Cedar Lake, at one time, was that taken six years ago by my old friend George Wilberforce. He came down on the early morning train one Saturday, started in fishing at 11 a. m., and left again for Chi-

cago by the evening train; altogether he was not actually fishing more than four hours, and two hours of this time he wasted in locating the ground. His catch was nine black bass weighing thirty-six pounds, and a finer and more equal-sized lot of fish I have never seen, considering the circumstances of the catch. His bait had dwindled down to four frogs, an imperfect frog bag, during his journey down, having allowed the remainder of a dozen to escape. He carefully economized on his bait, using only the leg of a frog instead



of the whole, and with these four frogs he caught the nine bass mentioned.

George, poor fellow, is now no more; but many were the delightful outings I enjoyed in his company. He fell a victim to his love of salmon fishing, three years ago, when wading a particularly dangerous, precipitous-bordered, salmon pool in North Donegal, Ireland. He inadvertently stepped into a deep hole, his waders filled at the waist, and unable to extricate himself he drowned.

The first time I met George was on the Furnesia dur-

ing an ocean trip from Moville to New York. He was making a fishing trip to the Pacific Coast, in company with three other Englishmen. One of them was named Fitzgerald, and the names of the others I cannot remember. It was their first visit to the United States, and Fitzgerald, like most Englishmen on their first visit, viewed the customs and manners of the country in a somewhat supercilious and contemptuous light. George stood a dinner in New York before we separated, at some hotel, I think as near as I can remember it was the Bryant House. I shall never forget the look which the head waiter gave our party, when Fitzgerald, after we were seated at the table, putting on his monocles and most killing, languid air, and after looking at the bill of fare, remarked that a freshly boiled lobster would be just the thing; adding in a contemptuous manner he supposed it would be impossible to obtain such a luxury in America. The waiter, with blood in his eye, told him he guessed he could be accommodated, so Fitzgerald added a lobster to the already varied order.

We started in with soup. It was vermicelli, and remarkably good; but Fitzgerald found fault with it.

The wait between the soup and the fish was somewhat protracted, fully twenty minutes, and during this interval Fitzgerald indulged in sarcastic remarks about the country.

However, presently the lobster made its appearance, and such a lobster! Never before and never since have I seen such a remarkable crustacean. It appeared to weigh fifty pounds, and I think the waiter, out of pure patriotism, must have scoured the country for miles around to obtain the largest lobster in existence. It made its debut on an enormous platter, and ye gods! what an avalanche of lobsterian matter descended in our midst when it was placed on the table. First was the body cut carefully in sections, each section purposely placed in a position calculated to display its mammoth proportions to the utmost; piled crosswise

above rose the smaller claws and crossing the whole were the two huge claws, each one a feast for a dozen hungry men.

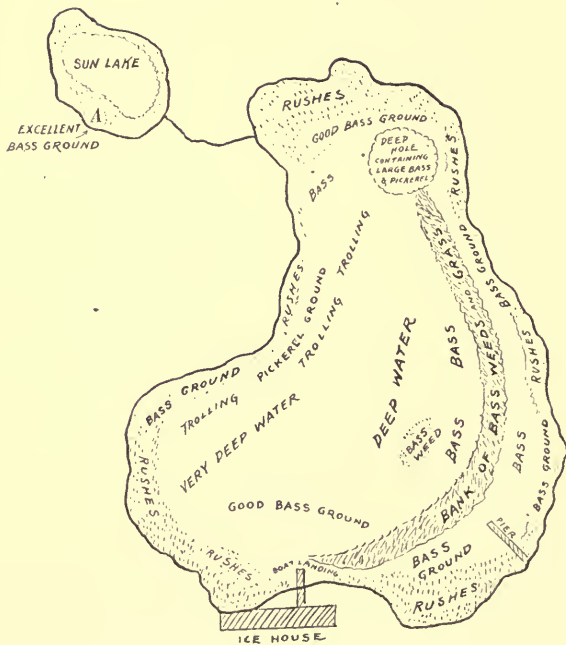
We all sat dumfounded at the spectacle! Even Fitzgerald was mum, unable to say a word, while the waiter stood by with the most serious countenance imaginable, and glibly apologized for having to serve us with such a small lobster, stating that the house was out of large ones; but as we appeared so anxious



“YE GODS! WHAT AN AVALANCHE OF LOBSTERIAN MATTER
DESCENDED IN OUR MIDST”

to have lobster he had heavily bribed the cook to send that one to the table, it being a standing order of the hotel that no lobster weighing less than two hundred-weight was ever to be put on the table, as a lobster weighing less than that lacked the peculiar delicious flavor and piquancy so much sought after by epicures.

“Holy smoke!” was all the astounded Fitzgerald could gasp, “if this is a small American lobster, what in the world are the big ones like?”



DEEP LAKE

CHAPTER V.

DEEP LAKE AND SUN LAKE. TOMMY AND THE GOAT.

Instead of teaching the young idea how to shoot, I have endeavored to instil into the mind of Johnson Junior a due appreciation of the delights of fishing. A trip for perch, three weeks ago, so enthused my oldest son Tommy that he has since been able to think and speak of nothing but fishing.

At the present moment Tommy is laid up for repairs, is in the deepest disgrace, and bears the general appearance of a small boy who has inadvertently run up against a thrashing machine. This state of affairs is all due to Tommy's attempt to prematurely enjoy the pleasure of playing and killing a large fish, or, more correctly speaking, a big goat of the William species.

It appears that Tommy was so brimful of the day's sport he had with the perch on his memorable fishing trip, that he talked the matter over with a neighbor's boy, and they mutually agreed it would be splendid fun to hook something big, to chase it around in turns, and hold the rod alternately, just to see how it would feel to have something big pulling at the top of a fish pole. After much confab it was decided the something big in this instance should be an old billy goat belonging to one of the neighbors.

Tommy and his fellow conspirator, by the judicious presentation of a plug of tobacco, succeeded in detaching the goat from his usual pasture of odds and ends, and inveigling him into our back lot when the rest of the family were away. They thoughtfully borrowed my favorite Bethabara casting rod, fixed up the reel, and having rigged it up with an extra strong running line and big hook, Tommy took the rod for the first innings. The neighbor's boy fixed the hook

firmly in the goat's hindquarters and commenced to do the chasing.

The ungrateful goat, unable to appreciate the humor of the situation, refused to be chased, for after one swift run, and the emittance of one heartrending bleat—during which he made almost superhuman efforts to extricate the hook—he returned at express speed and commenced a most malignant assault upon Tommy. My beautiful Bethabara rod was reduced to splinters, and Tommy—when the goat was through with him—was the most dilapidated small boy for many miles around. The tribute of the neighbor's boy to the goat's fit of indignation was the quickest sprint of his life, and one of the neighbors who happened in at the finale informed me confidentially that he never saw a kid make better time in a flat race in his life.

I am deeply thankful I have never encouraged Tommy to go gunning. His nature is so imitative and, withal, so extremely ardent in everything he undertakes, that I feel sure he would have taken my shotgun and borrowed a few of the neighbors' babies to practice upon.

Deep Lake and Sun Lake are two others of the several lakes located in the near vicinity of Lake Villa Depot, on the Wisconsin Central, whose waters afford good pickerel and bass fishing.

Many of the best fishing grounds in Deep Lake are comparatively open and free from surface weeds, enabling the angler to use a spoon to advantage; in fact, several of the oldest frequenters of Deep Lake, who are noted for their big catches, fish principally with a spoon and short, bait-casting rod.

There is quite a knack in using a spoon with the bait-casting rod in those places where surface vegetation occasionally appears. The spoon has to be cast lightly (great care being taken that the reel does not over-run), and then recovered quickly and brought toward the angler before it can sink and catch the weeds.

Fishing with the spoon is much more exciting sport than fishing with minnows, insomuch that the spoon is used near the surface, and the fish when striking it is obliged to break the water. This also applies to fishing with live frogs in the patches fringing the rush beds.

The bass ground, marked A on Sun Lake, is an exceptionally fine fishing ground whenever the fishes are feeding.

From the icehouse on the south point of Deep Lake,



“AND COMMENCED A MOST MALIGNANT ASSAULT UPON
TOMMY”

on both sides of the bank of bass weeds and grass, is fine bass fishing. The best pickerel ground is found on the east side of the lake, as shown on the map. The deep hole in the north end of the lake contains large bass and pickerel, but unless the weather is somewhat chilly it is best to fish the surrounding rush beds immediately adjoining.



"I MANAGED TO CRAWL AND CLING TO THE SLOPE CLEAR OF THE
WATER"

CHAPTER VI.

HASTINGS LAKE. MY POETICAL FISHING FRIEND.
ANGLING FOR AN OTTER.

When but a callow youth, I used to go a-fishing with a young man of the same age as myself. He was a gentle, lamb-like creature with large bovine eyes and long, black hair; uncut from the day he was born. His facial expression reminded one of an old cow who has long ceased to trouble herself with the cares of maternity. He was a poet, and used to seek my company and the pleasant waterside to contemplate loveliness and compose poems. He stuck to me with a pertinacity that was truly embarrassing, and the only reason I could not rid myself of him was due to the fact of being too tender-hearted to kill him.

He once wrote an ode to his fishing rod which he recited to it one morning just previous to using it, and the rod was so utterly demoralized it snapped into thirteen pieces the first cast he attempted. I merely mention this fact to show how atrocious his muse must have been.

The only time I ever licked him was when he attempted to read me some verses. He called them "Crumblets of Angling Reminiscences." They were as follows:

"The little streamlet on the hill,
Within the village church,
From which, three weeks ago to-night,
I collared that wall-eyed perch.

"Away beyond the hamlet's reach,
With many a pout and pucker,
Meanders the tiny rivulet
Where I cinched that eight-pound sucker.

"And just below the garden patch
Of Mickey Doolan's shanty,
Is the alder tree that sheltered me
While I made the bullheads ante."

The method by which at last I rid myself of him was

an introduction to a sweet little girl cousin of mine, at the same time hinting he was a young gentleman of wonderful parts and great expectations. She bit right away, and married him three days afterward, thus earning my everlasting gratitude.

I am aware the above is not in any manner connected with the avowed subject of this article, and I merely introduce it as a warning to those weak-minded brothers of the angle whom the delightful environments of their pursuit might seduce from the dutiful path of angling to that of the sinful and unpardonable practice of bad verse making.

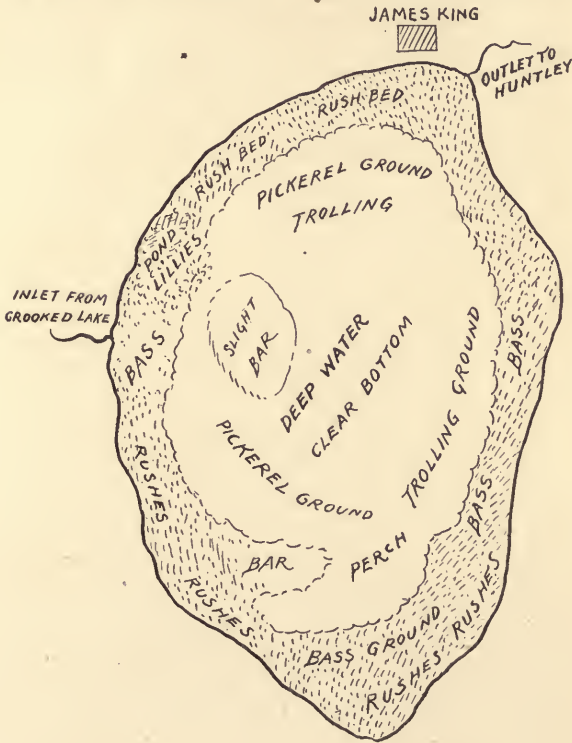
Hastings Lake lies about half a mile east of Crooked Lake, and although fairly well fished of late years, it still holds its own in the matter of sport to the angler. There are plenty of good-sized bass and pickerel within its waters, and big catches are often made by those fishermen acquainted with the locality. Hastings Lake is a trifle further from Lake Villa Depot than most of the lakes in the vicinity, hence comparatively few of the anglers who stop off at Lake Villa ever fish it.

There is but one slight bar in the lake; it is in the deepest water, leading to the rush line on the east side.

The lake, all round inshore, affords excellent bass fishing. Off the point of the bar is good perch ground. The pickerel ground is all around the lake line leading to the deepish water. Small frogs are the best bait to use when fishing for bass near inshore, and minnows when fishing for pickerel in the deeper waters adjoining. The best trolling water will be found on the north and east shores.

The sportsman who has never hunted or fished in the vast tangled wilderness of the Far West can form no conception of the arduous work and appalling difficulties he has to surmount in his journeyings. My old friend Cap' Riley of Portland, Ore., one of the best known elk hunters in the state, has often remarked it was worth a hundred dollars to get a pair of elk's horns out from the wilderness into the confines of

civilization; and I fully agree with him in this assertion. The foothills and mountains are one mass of tangled underbrush, immense treefalls and sinuous in-



HASTINGS LAKE

tergrown vines, through which the sportsman must pick and creep his way in the slowest and most tedious manner. Here a mammoth butt of fallen pine to surmount; there a thicket of intricate and seemingly im-

passable vine maple to crawl through, varied by vast mounds of upturned soil and deep holes.

It was early one morning, in 1893, I left my ranch on a spur of the Bear Mountain, in Cowlitz County, for a day's salmon fishing in the Kalama River, four miles north. The nature of the surroundings necessitated my taking even this short distance a two days' trip if I wished to spend a few hours on the stream. A short bait-casting rod, revolver, hunting knife, and a few pounds of beans, with a morsel of salt pork, was all I dared to load myself with. My object on this trip was to satisfy myself whether a salmon would take a spoon bait.

I started in at the Kalama Creek, which ended in the Kalama River, and fished the larger pools on my way down, picking up a half a dozen large rainbow trout and returning the Dolly Vardens and cutthroats, as this species of trout are called, to the water; I reached the Kalama River about three in the afternoon, and after fixing up camp started in for the evening fishing.

The spot I selected was a spacious rocky basin, shaped not unlike a huge bowl, with precipitous rocks rising either side several hundred feet in height, the sides studded with a scant growth of stunted underbrush and here and there spanned by the huge trunk of some fallen pines. The pool was probably fifty feet wide in the center, ending some forty yards below in a fall of about fifteen feet. The current was unusually strong and rapid. I intended to skirt this pool on its shallowest side, hugging the rocky wall on my left until I reached a big rock which stood out high and dry overlooking the fall.

I donned my waders, strapping them tightly around my waist, and slipped over my head an old inflated air cushion to provide against an accidental submersion. Experience has taught me the value of this precaution, and I would advise every angler who wades rapid streams with deep holes to wear either an inflated collar or a light collaret of cork around his neck when

wading, for if a deep hole is inadvertently stepped into and the waders fill (which in nine cases out of ten they will do), the buoyancy of the collar will keep the head above the water until a foothold can be reached.

After rigging up my rod I found I had left my spoon at home. This was a poser. There I was, on the most magnificent stretch of water that ever greeted an angler's vision, without the means of fishing it. However, I concluded to try something; so rigging up a large pickerel gang of four treble hooks mounted on a twisted snell of salmon gut, each treble about two inches apart, I selected the biggest of the rainbow trout from my creel—a fish weighing nearly a pound—and rigged it with the pickerel gang in just the same manner as though I was about to spin for pickerel with a small minnow.

When all was ready I cautiously waded into the pool almost to the top of my waders, and swaying the heavy bait made so long a cast that, instead of entering the water, it lodged on a ledge of rock a little above the surface on the opposite side. I allowed it to remain there a few moments and then gently pulled it off into the water, which it entered in a quiet, noiseless manner with scarcely a splash to mark its submersion. I commenced to reel in gently, and almost before I had made half a dozen turns of the reel handle a long brownish object appeared to rise from the bottom like a lightning flash and seize it, tightening the line and bending my rod nearly double. Almost simultaneously with this happening, the brownish object suddenly ceased its pull, and before I could sufficiently collect my thoughts it shot across the pool toward me and came full tilt against my legs, knocking me head over heels into the water.

I was next aware of a sharp prick in the calf of my leg, of something hanging thereon and frantically struggling to detach itself, and when I recovered a precarious foothold at the end of the pool to which I had been swept by the rapid rush of water, I looked

down and discovered the largest dog otter I have ever seen firmly hooked through my waders into the flesh, struggling like a very demon to free himself, and apparently as scared as I was myself at the novelty of the situation.

I attempted to scramble up the steep sides of the pool with my captive, but was so flurried and scared that little headway was made. My waders were full of water, and this and the weight of the otter made it hard work for me to obtain any secure hold. However, after what seemed to me to be hours, I managed to crawl and cling to the slippery rocky slope clear of the water, but could get no farther, having by this time, by the combined efforts of my fright and scramble, become pretty well exhausted. Just at this critical moment the snell broke, leaving one set of hooks in my leg, and the other in the otter, who dropped into the water with a loud splash and disappeared immediately. Rid of my burden, with much labor I managed to crawl to a more secure resting-place.

I took off my waders and found that such was the force of the struggle the strong Mackintosh of my waders had been torn some three inches down, and the hook was so deeply imbedded in the flesh that, instead of resorting to the old method of turning the barb outward and bringing the shank through after it, I had to cut quite deep into the flesh to extricate it, making quite a good sized wound. However, I stopped the bleeding with some tobacco leaves, and limped home, wondering whether it was possible that I could ever meet with a more strange happening than that which had just occurred.

CHAPTER VII.

HUNTLEY'S LAKE. SWALLOWING A FISH-HOOK.

I remember some three years ago fishing Huntley's Lake with Tom McGee. Tom is now somewhere in Canada, whither he went in search of health. He was an individual who lived under the impression that a portion of his liver was missing, a thin-faced, jaundice-complexioned little fellow, always suffering from some imaginary complaint or another and at the same time hunting for a remedy for that disorder. Every few weeks he would make the appalling discovery that one or another of his internal organs was either hopelessly deranged, missing altogether, or else turned topsyturvy. When I first knew him he had run the whole gamut of his internal economy, from his gall to his sweetbreads, and was then arriving at the firm conviction that an accident at birth had deprived him of his proper share of liver.

The amount of medicine that Tom always traveled with was immense. I have many a time seen him while playing a large fish suddenly recollect himself, lay down his rod, look at his watch and solemnly remark: "Exact time for medicine, Charley," and after deliberately measuring out and swallowing the required quantum resume his rod and pull in his fish.

On the day referred to, when Tom and I were fishing in Huntley's Lake, nothing was biting but the perch and they were biting furiously. They recalled to my memory the novel punishment our old schoolmaster used to inflict on us when I attended school as a small lad. How the old villain would task his ingenuity in this direction! Latin grammar was a stumbling block which always tripped me up, my conjugation of the verbs being abominable. I would "amo, amas, amat,"

etc., until I fairly got sick of the whole thing and knew less at the end than I did at the commencement. "Old Pepper," as we boys called our pedagog, would set some offending boy in a corner, after school hours, and selecting some absurd word would compel him to conjugate it in all its known and unknown moods and tenses. There was an old colored aunty living next door to the schoolhouse who did the cleaning, and one afternoon (owing to some misbehavior on my part) the word masticate was given me by Old Pepper to practice the usual grammarian gymnastics upon. For two mortal hours I declaimed: "I masticate; thou masticates; he masticates; she masticates; it masticates;" etc. The old ducky, coming along, listened outside the schoolhouse window to my edifying ranting for about twenty minutes, and then lifting her hands in wonderment, exclaimed loudly: "For de Lawd's sake, when-
ever will dat der boy hab done eating?"

It was the same thing with the perch on the occasion of which I am writing. If the old lady had been there I am sure she would have lifted her hands and said: "For de Lawd's sake, when-
ever will dem dere perches hab done feeding?" Never before or since have I seen perch feed so voraciously, they fairly jumped out of the water for our bait. One particularly large perch (it must have weighed quite two pounds, and I have never seen a larger one), which Tom caught, swallowed the hook almost before the bait touched the water. Tom was in a hurry to resume fishing, and in attempting to disgorge the hook the snell broke off short, leaving the hook away down in the gullet of the perch. Throwing the fish on one side, Tom remarked:

"By Jove, Charley, I'll have that all to myself for supper to-night," and went on fishing.

Two hours of such sport satisfied us, and selecting about a dozen of the largest fishes, we gave the remainder to some youngsters who were fishing near, packed up our traps and went home.

Mrs. Tom cooked our fishes that evening, and, after

a very hearty supper, during which Tom had appropriated for his sole benefit the large perch as he had promised he would, we sat down outside the veranda, and while Tom's wife did some sewing Tom entertained me with small talk on his innumerable ailments. All at once, without a moment's warning, Tom bounded about six feet into the air, let out a yell that scared



"I'M A DEAD MAN; I'VE SWALLOWED THAT FISHHOOK"

everyone within the ward, and approaching me with a white, scared face, exclaimed:

"Charley, I'm a dead man; I've swallowed that fishhook! Oh, what a cussed fool I was to eat that big perch!"

"Stuff and nonsense," I answered, "you couldn't have swallowed a No. 4 fishhook without noticing it."

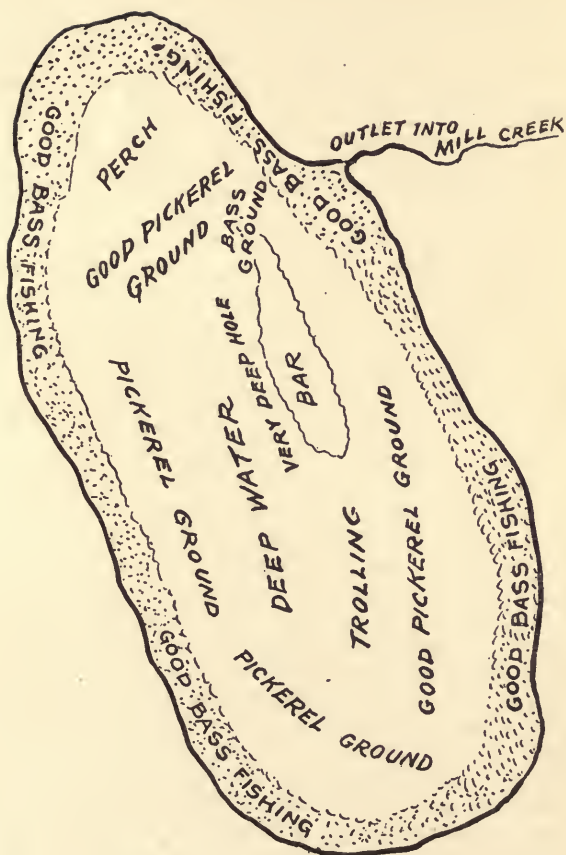
"But I did! I did!" he moaned. "Oh, what a miserable wretch I am! Think of the agonizing death in store for me! Oh, Charley, why didn't you eat that perch

instead of myself?" he whined, pathetically; "nothing ever hurts you."

His wife and myself tried to reassure him, telling him how utterly preposterous his conduct was, but all to no purpose. Tom persisted he had swallowed the fish-hook, and as a careful search of the heads and entrails of the fishes we had eaten for supper failed to reveal the missing hook, nothing could convince him to the contrary. After a little while Tom began to feel a severe pricking pain in the abdominal region, which gradually grew worse and worse, until, at last, about two hours after, he was stretched upon a bed with three doctors in attendance, and periodically uttering the most heartrending shrieks and cries, which he averred it was impossible to stop, owing to the pain he suffered. The doctors could do nothing, and plainly intimated to Tom's wife and myself the only thing the matter with their patient was an excessive imagination, scouting the idea of his having the hook as perfectly ridiculous.

In about another hour Tom got so bad that I plainly saw unless something was done to drive the idea out of his head he soon would become a subject for the coroner. I called Tom's wife aside, and made her bring me Tom's tackle-box. After a search I found an old hook of precisely the same size and pattern as the one Tom had been using when he caught that unfortunate perch in the morning. From this hook I broke off the snell as near the shank as possible. After some searching I selected the biggest perch's head I could find, and although it was not the head of the big fish he had caught in the morning, yet it might pass for it. I fixed this hook firmly in the back of its gills, saw that everything looked natural, and assuming a joyous expression of countenance, burst into the bedroom in which Tom lay, now seriously ill, and yelled out in an exultant voice:

"I've found that confounded old fishhook, old fellow; you never swallowed it at all, for here it is!"



HUNTLEY'S LAKE

Saying this, I held up the perch's gills with the fishhook firmly embedded therein. Tom gave one look, bounded off the bed, seized my prize and examined it carefully, the color meanwhile returning to his face.

"Charley Johnson," he exclaimed, tragically, "you have saved my life!"

Twenty minutes afterward Tom was perfectly recovered and making a hearty meal of tripe and onions, and unblushingly I was relating how and where I found the missing hook in the fish's head.

Three days afterward an old Thomas cat, the particular pet of Tom's wife, began to visibly pine away, and within a week was a mere wreck of skin and bones. Shortly afterward it died and Tom, thinking it had been poisoned by some of the neighbors, insisted on making a post mortem examination on its remains. The first incision Tom made revealed to his astonished gaze the identical fishhook which was supposed to have caused him so much internal turmoil a week previously. Really, I couldn't help laughing at the absurdity of the situation when Tom, turning slowly round to me, gazed with unaffected surprise, and said, solemnly:

"Charley Johnson, I will never believe you again, sir, as long as I live."

Huntley's Lake is about four miles north and slightly east of Hastings Lake, and is reached from Lake Villa depot on the Wisconsin Central.

The lake is deep water off-shore all around. The bar shown in the northwest is very slight, and runs to the deep hole. Around this hole, during chilly days and also late in the season, is the best fishing ground of any. The lake contains large bass and pickerel, but during the last few years it has been little fished, owing, probably, to its being farther away than the other lakes.

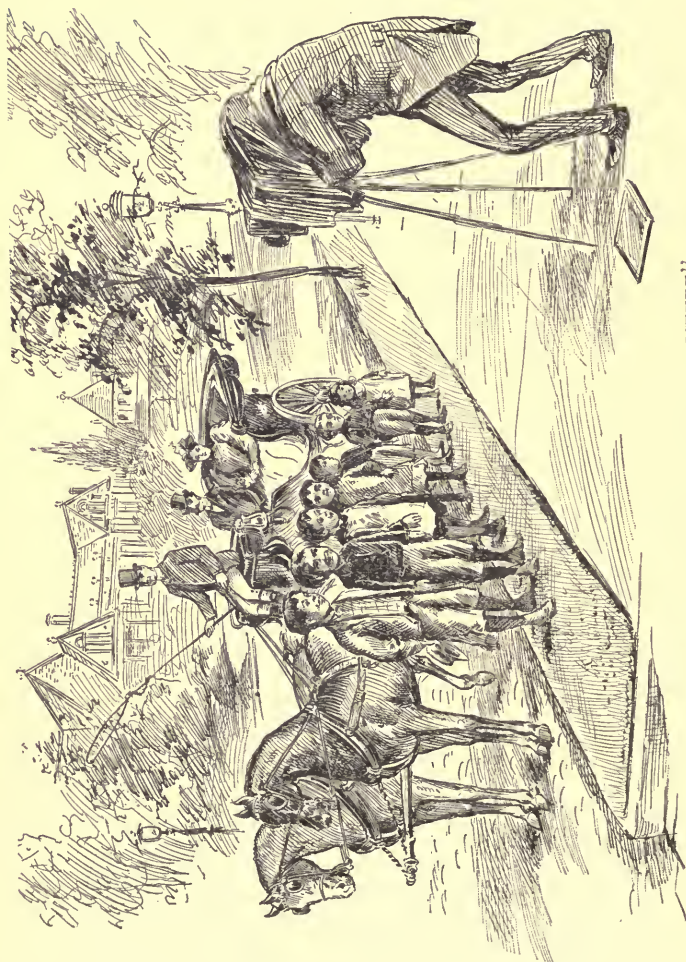
I am convinced a trip to this lake will well repay the angler. The best way to reach and fish it is to procure a rig and Smith Wright as guide, from the Sand Lake Hotel, driving over in the morning and returning in the evening. This would give plenty of time for a good

day's sport. Smith Wright knows every hole and corner of Huntley's Lake, the best places to fish and how to fish them.

There are two kinds of bait casters, the one who uses a fine casting line and very light minnow, frog, spoon, or whatever the bait may be, without shot or weight of any description to assist in casting; the other uses a heavy line, big minnow, weighty frog, or other bait proportionately heavy.

The man who casts a light bait is apt to look with disdain upon the fellow who practices the heavy casting tactics, but there are times when heavy bait-casting is absolutely essential to successful fishing, particularly in lake fishing where weeds are general. The ideal fishing of the expert is to make long casts with a small frog, light minnow, or spoon, placing the lure before the fish with hardly a perceptible splash. In other words, fine and far-off fishing.

This style of angling is necessary to successfully fish some waters, particularly those where the water is abnormally clear and free from weeds; but in many of the lakes of the Fox Lake region the light style of bait-casting would be productive of more bites than fish. Most of the fishing is done, if not actually in the weed patches, still so near that the fishes, when they make their runs after seizing the bait, will have to be pulled out from them, thus making a strong running line absolutely necessary; and to get out a stout casting line to any distance a heavy bait is imperative. Personally, I always fish as lightly as possible, and obtain more true enjoyment from delicately placing a small frog upon a dock leaf with a good long cast, and thence lightly flicking it into the water with the slightest splash possible, than from any of the heavier methods of casting which I am often compelled to pursue.



“AND THE COLONEL TOOK THE PICTURE”

CHAPTER VIII.

LAKE MARIE AND BLUFF LAKE. SHELLFISH AND CLAM CHOWDER. THE COLONEL'S PHOTOGRAPH.

The first time I fished Lake Marie was with my old friend, George Murrell. George and myself had made a trifling bet as to who would catch the most fish. Had I been as well acquainted as I am now with the astute diplomacy of which Master George is capable, I would never have gambled with him at all, under any consideration. However, after fishing all day without a bite, the shades of approaching evening found us both fishless and disgusted:

"Well, old man," I chuckled to myself, "there's one consolation; you haven't won, anyhow!"

Premature joy on my part! For the crafty rascal had deliberately placed a small worm on his hook, and coolly dropped it into the gaping shell of an unsuspecting clam that happened to be airing its vitals in a shallow puddle near by! The clam shut up mighty quick when it felt the worm, and George hauled it up and demanded the bet. I have often thought since what a fool I was not to find another clam and make the bet a tie; but, there, I never could think of the right thing to do until it was too late.

Speaking of shellfish reminds me of Tom Jennings. There was a fellow in New York who had opened an English ale house and shell oyster bar in connection. The oysters were opened by an attendant and given to the patrons on the half-shell. One day Tom Jennings strolled into the bar and noticed a Frenchman holding a huge half-shell in his hand, staring hard at an enormous oyster which lay on it, with an air of wistful longing. Tom was always ready to be agreeable, and thinking the Frenchman was in a quandary, politely

suggested that the proper way to eat an oyster was to swallow it whole. The Frenchman turned round to Tom and asked him if he could swallow the one he held in his hand.

"Why, sure thing," said Tom; and suiting the action to the word, he took the proffered bivalve, and, with a tremendous effort, managed to gulp it down. The Frenchman held up his hands in admiration at the feat, and exclaimed:

"Mon Dieu! et es vonderful; nine times have I myself et tried to swallow, and et always comes back!"

Two minutes after Tom had acquired this information, the oyster again came back; and Tom, while endeavoring to soothe his insulted stomach with something warm, swore softly to himself that he would be parboiled before he would ever attempt to be polite to a Frenchman again.

Tom seemed to be unlucky in his feeding, for it was only three weeks before that he had strolled into a Bowery restaurant and ordered clam chowder. After he had eaten quite a considerable portion, a certain qualmish feeling in his stomach warned him something was wrong; so he called the darky who ran the place, and said he:

"You black rascal! what confounded filth have you been feeding me upon?"

"Dat dar am clam chowder, sah, and berry good chowder, too."

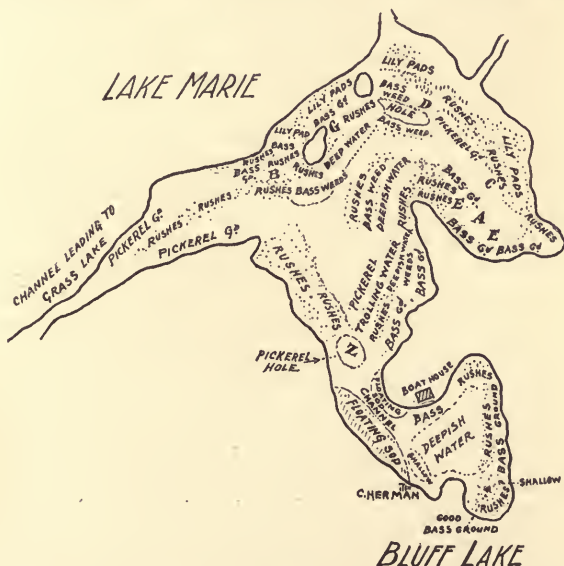
"Chowder, you dusky villain," answered Tom, his gorge rapidly rising as he discovered a bunch of fungus in the bottom of his plate, "how long has it been made?"

"Dat chowder was made last Spring, when I resumed dis hyar bisness; and ef de folkses on dis hyar street don' dun eat hyar of'ner, it am berry likely some ob dat chowder will be on han' nex' Spring!"

The licking which Tom inflicted on that unfortunate darky cost Tom forty dollars and costs.

Lake Marie and Lake Bluff are reached from Antioch depot on the Wisconsin Central. The two lakes are

joined by a narrow channel bounded on each side by an expanse of floating sod. There is good perch, bass and pickerel fishing. This lake is very much exposed to the wind, and but a slight breeze is required to cause strong waves and a choppy surface. The fishes will feed in Lake Marie in rough water, where the same surface conditions on many of the other lakes would be fatal sport, yet there is no piece of water in the whole



region where fine and far-off fishing is so necessary to secure a good catch as in Lake Marie.

The lake for many years past has been a particularly favorite resort for the angler, and although the fishes are fairly plentiful they are extremely shy and hard to catch. The presence of a boat, announced by the dip of the sculls, will cause every fish within a hundred and fifty feet to scurry for shelter, and the only method of approaching them with any show of success is by

drifting in a boat, using fine tackle and making long casts, casting a minnow in the more open stretches of water and frogs for evening fishing in the lily pads. There are several hotels in the immediate vicinity of the lake, most of which send buses to meet the trains at Antioch. There are plenty of boats, but the angler had better take his own bait as the supply at the hotels is uncertain.

Even to an experienced angler Lake Marie would prove a deceiving piece of water. There is so much apparently good fishing ground, bearing those unmistakable fishy signs by which likely spots are ordinarily located—in the shape of bass and pickerel weeds, lily pads, with favorable formations of bottom and required depth of water—that unless a man is thoroughly posted or knows the water he can waste much valuable time in fishing those spots which, although of an inviting aspect, are barren of fish.

The points marked on the chart are the best spots to fish; and where the angler's time is limited he will find it best to fish one of these points, and thence row to another without wasting time on the intervening stretches of water. The best bass ground is at those spots marked A, B, C, D, E, F and G. The largest fishes are generally caught in the bass weeds and rushes of the deepish stretch of water at C, and the spots B and G are exceptionally fine yielding pieces of water for bass.

The pickerel hole just outside the channel is the best spot of any in the lake for pickerel. Both sides of the channel leading into Grass Lake are favorite resorts for pickerel also, particularly at those spots where weed beds and rush patches are found in the middle of the channel.

I recollect some four years ago fishing this channel with Colonel Budd of San Francisco. We caught seventeen pickerel, all good-sized*fishes. The Colonel photographed them, hanging the fishes up in a row by

their gills, with myself in the picture; but owing to the position in which I stood the fishes looked twice as large as I did.

I recollect another picture, which the Colonel took with his camera once in Idaho, two years ago. There were three of us in the party—the Colonel, Judge Meredith and myself. We were on a trout fishing trip on the Snake River. The Colonel never traveled without his camera, for he was a regular kodak fiend and missed no opportunity of getting a snap shot at anything that struck his fancy.

We were staying at Squire Mattson's house, one of the finest residences in the state. One morning just after breakfast all of us, including the Squire, were lounging and smoking outside the front of the house discussing plans for the day's sport, when a procession hove in sight that made us all wonder what in the world it could be. It consisted of an old, mop-haired granger and his wife—a thin, hatchet-faced, sour-visaged female in a bunchy calico gown—with seven children, the youngest about three, the eldest apparently nine, with a year's difference in the age of each, coming down the road, ranged symmetrically according to size and looking like an animated stairway of seven steps. The party stopped when the family reached us, and the old man, after gazing admiringly around, said to his wife:

"Mighty purty looking place, ain't it, Mariah?"

His wife, who was evidently out of temper, snapped out some answer, and addressing the bunch of small fry, told them that if their Pap wasn't such a doggoned lazy ignoramus they could all be living in a better house themselves!

"Say, Mariah," the old man continued, without taking the least notice of his wife's slanderous speech, "wouldn't your old Pap down East be mighty tickled to see you and me living in a swell place like this? Why, here's one of them picture taker fellows," he went on, as he espied the Colonel's camera standing

by the gate. "Say, mister, how much would you charge to take us all in first-class, bang-up style, just like Benny Burton had took last Fall to send down South to a gal he was kind of hankering to get hitched to?"

The Colonel entered into the humor of the thing, and offered to give them a picture for nothing.

"Jee whiz!" the old chap said; "that's real good of you, and say, Mariah," he added, turning to his wife, "we'll be took right here, and send the pictur away back East to yer old Pap, and he'll surely show it to the neighbors and they'll think as how the house belongs to us and we are right smart fixed!"

His wife, who commenced to take some interest in the proceedings at this stage, began to fix her hair and tidy the youngsters. They were certainly the merriest, healthiest and dirtiest looking lot of little urchins I have ever seen.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," the Squire remarked to me; "we'll fix the whole crowd up in style, and give the old fellow a chance to ring in the biggest bluff of his life on his folkes away back East."

Saying this, Mattson went into the house and shortly returned with a plug hat, frock coat, and some female finery which, although slightly the worse for wear, was good enough for the purpose. With these in his hand he escorted the whole crowd to the barn, took them in, and telling them to rig themselves out, left them. About ten minutes afterward the old fellow and his wife, with the children, made their appearance, the children gazing with open-mouthed awe on their transmogrified parents.

"Say, Squire," the old man remarked, "this is real good of you to cotton to us in this fashion; durn me ef I don't feel as ef I ain't sole proprietor of everything on the place."

Mattson got out his best gig, mounted his driver on the box, the couple took their places with the kids arranged according to their age in the front, and the

Colonel took the picture. The old man told us they lived on a small ranch about seven miles up the river. He and his wife had settled there about twelve years previously, and with the exception of the large family of youngsters they were as poor as when they came. The Colonel promised to send them the picture when it was finished, and after disrobing themselves of the borrowed finery away they went.

About five weeks afterward I was walking down the main street of the little town six miles from the Squire's house, when I came across the old man driving a pair of dilapidated mules with an old broken wagon attached. He stopped at once when I hailed him.

"Well, old chap," I said, "how did the photograph come out?"

"Gol darn the pictur, anyway," he answered, testily; "Mariah and I sent it to her Pap, with a letter saying as how we had more stock and land than we knew what to do with, and money to burn, thinking it would kind of make Mariah's folks think how smart we wus; and threw in a hint that in writing back they ought to address the letter to Squire Gawk instead of calling me plain Jimmy Gawk as they was used to. Sure enough, Mariah's Pap writ back, and said as how now we was so well fixed he would leave the farm to Mariah's brother Tom; and that Mariah's old Uncle Abe, who had died three days after he received our letter, had altered his will directly he saw it and left as fine a section of grazing land as could be found in the state to Mariah's seventh cousin, sayin' he guessed we wouldn't need it, anyhow. And there's a hull pile of my old neighbors wrote to tell me they're all coming on here, and looks to me to stake 'em until they gets fixed, sayin' that ef an old galoot like me can get so well fixed as I am they reckon they'll be runnin' for gov'nor before they've been here six months. And the worst of it is, that since the news has came, there's no livin' with Mariah, she's so pesterful and mean and, of course, woman-like, lays all the blame on me. Well, well," the old man

said, moodily, as he drove away, "I guess everyone makes a doggoned ass of himself sometime or another; but of all the ornerest, softest, bedrock old jaybirds that ever was, that indoovidual is myself!"

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CHAPTER IX.

FIRST OR GAGE'S LAKE. AN EMBARRASING POSITION.

THE INCIDENT OF AN IRON POT.

I have been in several embarrassing positions in my life. Once when a young man just emerging from my teens, while bathing in what I considered a sufficiently sequestered spot to insure perfect privacy, a young lady came along and sat down on the rock under which my clothes were concealed. She had a novel which she commenced to read, and the work must have been of absorbing interest, for she read for fully half an hour without any signs of letting up or moving on. Meanwhile I had taken refuge in a rush bed, about fifty yards away, from which I was anxiously awaiting her exit. The water was cold and I was at last in sheer desperation obliged to acquaint her with the fact of my presence. She was a young lady of quick discernment, for grasping the situation in an instant, simultaneously with the piercing shriek which evidenced her discovery of my proximity she vacated the spot with the celerity of a frightened hare.

Another time, when doing the fatherly act at Pudgy Stickel's wedding, I was chosen as the most proper person to donate the bride (pretty little Arabella Wilkins) to my old friend Pudgy. Things got so mixed up that the ceremony was all but performed before it was discovered that, instead of giving the bride away, I had been mistaken by the purblind old parson who performed the ceremony for the bridegroom, and was receiving her instead. However, things were set right at the last moment, and Pudgy—who was unearthed from behind a pew in a complete state of nervous prostration—was put in my place and received his bride with the last line of the marriage service.

These are but two of the many times in which I have been what a society person would call "de trop," but the worst of all was an incident that happened to me at Gage's Lake last year. I was experimenting with the fly when a young lady came along, and before I was aware of it I had caught her securely in the leg with a No. 4-0 Johnson Fancy bass fly. Poor little thing! She sat down and boo-hooed and sobbed as though her heart would break, beseeching me in one breath to take the horrid thing away, and immediately afterward indignantly repelling me when I offered to take her at her word.

Eventually we compromised, I breaking off the leader and escorting the badly scared and half fainting little miss to the hotel; whence, having delivered her over to the care of the landlady, I made an ignominious sneak for home.

First or Gage's Lake is not to be found on the ordinary maps which are supposed to contain the lakes of the lake region. It is located half a mile south and slightly east of Second Lake, and is reached from Gray's Lake Station on the Wisconsin Central. There is good bass and pickerel fishing to be had in these waters, providing the weather is favorable. But it's all or none, when fishing Gage's Lake; in fact, of all the lakes I know there is none which is so uncertain in regard to sport.

My experience of Gage's Lake is that minnows are the best all-round bait that can be used. The water just outside the lily pads on the northern point is one of the best spots for evening fishing on the lake. Nearer in-shore on the spot marked A is the best bass ground during the colder months, and just outside the fringe of bass weeds is good pickerel water at all times. The extreme northern point is also fine holding ground for bass, and also the spot marked halfway across on the west shore.

One of the most remarkable sights I have ever wit-

nessed happened while fishing Gage's Lake this Summer. Smith Wright, of Sand Lake Hotel; Mr. Charles Hamilton, of Chicago, and myself were in the boat together, Mr. Hamilton rowing, Wright and myself casting, using minnows as bait. We came across a small



FIRST OR GAGE'S LAKE

pocket within the rushes where the water at no place exceeded nine inches in depth. The appearance of this spot indicated bass, and Hamilton placed the boat, with scarcely a perceptible ripple to disturb the water in the vicinity, in the most favorable position to command it with our casting rods, about eighty feet away.

Wright made the first cast, and simultaneously with his minnow lightly reaching the surface four big bass, from as many different corners, dashed to the center of the pool in a mad race for the minnow. The lucky winner of the race, or rather the unlucky one as it turned out subsequently, had no sooner seized the bait than he protruded his head and shoulders fully one-third of his length from out the water and commenced to gulp the minnow down, while the other three bass literally climbed over him in their frantic efforts to take the minnow away from him. We plainly saw the whole proceeding and Wright giving him but little time for deliberation struck, and as the surroundings admitted of no delay laid his rod down and by the aid of the line yanked him away from his quarrelsome companions, and had him in the boat before he could realize what had happened to him.

I made the next cast and the same scene was repeated with three bass, instead of four, the fishes, owing to the slight depth of water and the stillness of the surface, making a wake like that of a muskrat swimming across. This fish I hooked and he also came in hand over hand.

Wright made another cast, and the two remaining bass went for his minnow. He hooked one, but at the last minute lost him. Again I tried the remaining bass with a frog, which one took and after hooking him I lost him in just the same manner that Wright had the previous one. The two bass we had captured weighed four and a half pounds and five pounds, respectively, the larger one falling to Wright's rod.

This day's fishing was an eventful one, for shortly afterward, when making a cast in rather deepish water, my hook befouled something and after about fifteen minutes' patient wriggling and judicious pulling we unearthed from the bottom a small iron pot—heavens knows how many years it had been buried there—with my hook firmly fixed in the curl of the

handle. However, there were no rare old coins in it or valuables of any description, only some mud and shells, and we threw it back again to bother some other fisherman later.

Speaking of iron pots reminds me of the last time I visited Ireland, three years ago, when Billy Jackson and myself found ourselves in a little shebang near Kilmacreean, in North Donegal. We met four English tourists on the same errand as ourselves—trout fishing in the neighboring burns. We spent a most convivial evening together, and during the early part of it, as the company had been at a loss for a spittoon as the Britishers called it, Billy had slipped out into the kitchen and surreptitiously brought in a large iron pot; and into this improvised cuspidor the entire crowd had during the evening paid ample tribute. Just before going to bed, Billy called me on one side and warned me not to eat any of the chickens which would probably appear at the breakfast table in the morning, as he had seen the hired girl while picking them about equally dividing her attention between the fowls and her olfactory organ. So we made up our minds to stick to plain potatoes, and the next morning made our breakfast solely on the contents of the huge collander of jacketed Murphies which graced the center of the board. The potatoes appeared to me at the time of eating to have a smoky flavor, and to be of a rather darker hue than usual.

Breakfast finished we retired into the little red-curtained parlor at the back, for a smoke preparatory to setting out for the day's fishing. Billy looked for our cuspidor of the previous night; and at last, not seeing it, he asked the red-haired Irish servant wench what had become of it.

"Sure, an' is it the big iron pot ye be afther?" she queried. Billy nodded.

"Well, it's just outside now," she said, "an' afther bein' hardly cooled since cugin' the praties ye ait for breakfasht this mornin'!"

CHAPTER X.

CHITTENDEN AND DRUCE LAKES. SANDY M'GREE'S EEL PIE.

A friend of mine, a Mr. George Wallace of Chicago, told me last week that he took a silver eel weighing about three pounds from Chittenden Lake last July. His catch was somewhat unique, for I have since asked many anglers who have fished the lakes for years whether they have ever seen or caught an eel in its waters, and their answer invariably has been: "No."

It is strange that eels are not found in great numbers in these lakes. Everything is favorable for their existence—plenty of feed, a muddy bottom in which to secrete themselves during the colder months, and gravelly shallows in which to scour at nights for food. Added to this the eel is a most delicious eating fish, propagates very rapidly, and will travel long distances at night through the wet grass from one piece of water to another.

Speaking of eels reminds me of the time when I was in Edinburgh, Scotland, some ten years ago. I was staying with a Scotch friend who had undertaken to escort me around and show me the sights. He turned round to me one evening, just as we were coming out of the theater, and with that solemn air of disproportionate gravity with which only a Scotchman can propound some trifling query, said:

"Mon, ha' ye ever eaten one o' Sandy McGree's hot eel pies?"

"An eel pie," I answered; "what the deuce is an eel pie?"

"An eel pie," my friend asserted, "is the most luscious and delicious combination o' pastry and fish ye ever tasted! Gang along and we'll baith buy one."

Saying this, he seized my arm and hurried me through several tortuous small passages and by-streets until at last he stopped at the entrance of a small, dismal-looking shop, lighted by an oil lamp. Into this shop we went and an old, shriveled-up specimen of humanity, whom my conductor addressed as Sandy, dived his hands into a tin resembling a hot tomale can and produced two small double-crusteds pies, which he handed over to us in exchange for a fourpenny bit.

"Wait until we got on the 'bus," my friend said, "and we'll eat them."

A few moments after we had climbed to the top of one of the many double-decked buses at the corner of a badly-lighted thoroughfare thronged with people anxious to get home for the night. The seat I occupied overlooked the street and the pie in my hand certainly smelled so tempting, if the gravy which was dripping from it was any criterion, that I prepared to eat it. The pastry was a soft, doughy pie evidently somewhat underdone. As I raised it to my mouth and prepared to take the first bite, a tall, well-dressed Scotchman standing directly underneath me looked up to hail our driver, and at the same instant the hot juice from the interior of the pie burst forth and scalded my fingers so badly that involuntarily I let it drop. That eel pie landed squarely on the tall gentleman's upturned visage, bespattering him with the almost boiling contents.

The surprised look he wore when the pie struck him was followed by such an intermingled torrent of horribly anguishing howls and Scotch profanity that the whole neighborhood was aroused. Two policemen hurried up, but before he could wipe his face sufficiently clean and collect himself to explain, the driver—who was unconscious of my escapade—whipped up his horses and we were hurried away; for which it is needless to say I was profoundly thankful. My friend, after devouring his pie in silence and wiping his whiskers, simply turned and coolly remarked:

"Eh, mon! it's a great peety ye wasted your ple; it's four bawbees clean gone. But, if that chiel had only caught ye wouldn't he have given ye fits?"

Chittenden and Druce lakes are about a mile in a southeasterly direction from Fourth or Miltimore Lake. They are reached from Rollins Depot on the Wisconsin Central. Plenty of buses and conveyances meet the trains, and an abundant supply of boats will be found on the lakes. A good point to start from is the Mallory Hotel on Druce Lake, rowing from the landing below the house, following the shore northward and around the lake until the channel is reached which leads into Third Lake. The waterway between the two lakes is generally dry in the Summer, necessitating a portage of about a hundred yards, hence it is advisable to take the lightest boat that can be obtained. The north shore, just outside the rush bed, is good bass fishing right into the mouth of the channel. The best pickerel ground is just off the deep water, outside the rushes, on the east side of the lake, south of the hotel. There is also some good bass water in the rushes south of the channel.

Starting into Chittenden Lake from the channel, it is as well to row south to the end of the shallow blank bottom, which stretches some distance inshore, until the deepish water and bass weeds in the southern portion are reached. At this point there is some splendid fishing ground, bass and pickerel being extremely plentiful. Minnows are the best bait that can be used. From there on down to the outlet, on the extreme southern end of the lake, is the best ground in the lake during chilly weather. Try the bass weeds in the deepish water, and if not successful there try within the rush lines. Sometimes the fishes will lie farther out than at others, and a hundred feet nearer in or farther out from shore will make much difference to the angler. Proceeding in a northwesterly direction, a long stretch of rushes will be found extending quite a distance from the shore, with moss and silk

weeds undergrowth in the shallower water inshore and bass weeds in the deeper stretches, dotted here and there with patches of pickerel weeds. This is fairly good bass ground, but unless the angler has plenty of time before him it will hardly pay him to linger and fish it, but rather to go farther north until he finds the rush line diminishes in distance from the shore with deeper water and bass weeds on its margin.

In the northwestern corner is the inlet from Fourth Lake, and from there on all around the north shore is as good pickerel and bass ground as a man could wish for. When fishing among the lily pads in the northwesterly point of the Fourth Lake outlet, at evening, frogs will be found far preferable to minnows.

CHAPTER XI.

LONG LAKE. A LESSON IN BAITCASTING. TOBY SNUFFLES AND THE LITTLE SCHOOL MARM. UP TO DATE BARBERING.

Once on a time, when I did not know any better, I offered to initiate a friend of mine into the mysteries of bait-casting. He was an alderman, and as I was depending upon his influence to obtain a government position for a distant and aged relation, namely, that of scrub lady in the county dog pound, I felt I could ill afford to jeopardize her future prospects by being anything else than immeasurably cordial and blind to any questionable conduct of which he might be guilty. Beyond saying my pupil was a genial, good-natured, fat man, I will not further disclose his identity.

We selected Long Lake as the scene of our operations, and at the end of three hours he had so far advanced as to occasionally make a cast without impaling one or another of those odd portions of my anatomy which everlastingly appeared to get in the path of his hook. My ears in particular appeared to bother him, for it seemed an utter impossibility for him to make three consecutive casts without sticking his hook into one of them. In fact, whenever he missed his hook, it got to be the recognized thing to search my ears before looking further.

However the lesson was over at last, and together we came ashore; he jubilant at his proficiency, and I mentally calculating the time which would have to elapse before the ragged edges of my ears would cease to resemble a broken mushroom.

The amount of dodging I was forced to keep up during this trip reminded me of my first sweetheart

and the difficulties I encountered when courting her. She was a demure little schoolma'am, as pretty as a peach, just seventeen years old, and the eldest of a family of sixteen brothers and sisters, all of whom had come into the world with unfailing annual regularity. Her ma and pa were great people for fried chicken, and it was their practice to let the seven or eight younger members of the family lie around the floor, gnawing a greasy drumstick or dirty wing bone to keep them quiet until their turn came at the table. Whenever I visited my charmer these kids were the terror of my life; for it is needless to state I always wore my best Sunday clothes, and it can macy was required to keep my trousers unspotted and pet the youngsters at the same time. The children were of an affectionate disposition, very fond of me, and used to select my knees as the vantage ground on which to discover hidden morsels of gristly sweetness.

I confided my troubles to a particular chum of mine, one Toby Snuffles by name, and he generously offered to keep me company, wearing a suit for the occasion, and to amuse the kids while I talked sweet nothings to my inamorata. He was a chuckle-headed, pan-faced and most uninteresting individual, entirely lacking in the refined disposition and intellectual attainments which I possessed; yet, strange to say, on his first appearance the young lady treated my further attentions with cold disdain, and before the evening was fairly over had unblushingly appointed my rival as her future daily escort from the schoolhouse to her home. Toby eventually married her. He was a gardener by occupation, working at Squire Brown's. The Squire was a noted horticulturist and most of Toby's work was on the Squire's flower beds.

When Toby asked the old man's consent to marry his daughter, he made up his mind to attempt it in a neat little figurative speech of his own, and getting the old man into a merry mood one evening, took the

little schoolma'am by the hand, and stepping boldly up to the old gentleman asked his permission to transfer his daughter from the parental bed into his own. The old man surveyed the embarrassed couple for a few moments, in thoughtful silence, and then said:

"Well, young man, I have no objection provided you marry her first."

Long Lake is best reached from the Lake Villa depot on the Wisconsin Central. It is an excellent fishing lake, and in my estimation ranks next to Fourth or Miltimore Lake. Some of the ground in the south-



LONG LAKE

east corner is exceptionally fine and contains very large bass; in fact, it is no unusual thing for an angler to catch a string of a dozen fine bass weighing from two to four pounds each. But this kind of work is usually the result of expert bait-casting, for there is no lake in the whole chain where the novice or bungler is more apt to meet with disappointment than at Long Lake. In this respect it is somewhat similar to Lake Marie. Either a good surface ripple is required to obscure the keen vision of the fishes, or extremely fine and far-off casting is requisite to catch the larger ones.

Of course, all my observations are intended to apply to large fishes only, or, in angler's parlance, "sizable

fish." Any bungler can catch small ones, hence I consider them unworthy a good angler's notice, and as such I do not include them in my comments beyond stating that I have always found small game fish extremely erratic in disposition, eagerly seizing anything edible without regard to time or place. In fact, similar to all smaller members of any family—fishy or otherwise—unformed in character, consequently irregular in behavior and possessing no settled habits from which to deduce data of value.

The best evening fishing during the hotter months of the year is among the lily pads on the western shore, north of Graham's Hotel, using a medium-sized frog as bait. There is no better water in the lake for good all-round pickerel fishing than that on the southern shore, in the deepish water just outside the fringe of bass weeds. There is excellent bass ground in the water just outside the rush line on the eastern shore; fishing the various depths of water according to the temperature—on a warm day in the rushes and on a chilly day in the deeper water.

I used to fish Long Lake with old Peter Quincy. Peter used to row me, and probably he knew more fishy spots in the lake than any other man living; in fact, it was entirely owing to his good generalship that I used to make the big catches I did. In his younger days Peter had followed barbering, and away back in the fifties found himself in a small Western mining town where, while being shaved in the principal barber's shop of the place, the eternal loquacity of the man who shaved him caused him to think that a deaf and dumb barbering establishment—with a few other needful modifications—would prove a paying venture.

Within a week he had carried his idea into execution, and his employes, in consideration of extra salary, were solemnly sworn to converse only in the deaf and dumb alphabet, and under no consideration whatever to speak a word to the customers. Peter him-

self followed the same line of conduct and placed a large placard in the window bearing the following announcement:

.....
ALL OUR EMPLOYES ARE DEAF AND DUMB,
EAT BAKERY LUNCHES,
AND HAVE WARM HANDS.
.....

Within three weeks he had closed up every other barber's shop in the town, and was on the road to accumulate a rapid fortune, when one day an old, seedy-looking pothouse bum, possessing a flow of argumentative discourse on the then political question of the day which nothing short of a dynamite bomb could destroy, sat down in his chair and began to belabor the opposite party—to which Peter belonged—in such a torrent of unearthly profanity and biting sarcasm that Peter, unable to stand it any longer, clean forgot he was supposed to be deaf and dumb and talked back.

A stormy argument followed, in which his employes and a crowd of citizens took part. The shop was dismantled and wrecked, and it was only the opportune arrival of the entire police force of the town which prevented bloodshed. At the finish just before he surrendered himself into the hands of the big constable who arrested him, Peter thoughtfully kicked over a naphtha lamp which happened to be burning on the counter, and within three minutes the shop was in ashes.

Two weeks afterward Peter collected his insurance and came back East.

ROUND LAKE.



ROUND LAKE

CHAPTER XII.

ROUND LAKE. A QUEER ADVERTISEMENT AND A TROUBLESOME CANINE.

In looking over the advertising columns of a daily paper some few weeks ago, the following advertisement caught my eye: "The advertiser wishes to meet with a staid, cheerful gentleman of sporting proclivities, one who uses no profanity, tobacco or liquor and is fond of prayer."

This advertisement seemed to read somewhat uncanny. I could understand a quiet, elderly, old fishing crank of starchy habits preferring for his fishing chum a man who neither drank, swore nor smoked; but why he wished to associate with a person fond of prayer I could not imagine. My curiosity was such that I was obliged to correspond with the writer of the advertisement. I wrote him a polite letter stating that although forty years of age I had never yet indulged in any of the reprehensible practices referred to in his advertisement, begging him to communicate his reasons for such a peculiar request and explain fully the tenor of the case.

Two weeks afterward I received the following letter from a gentleman signing himself Rev. Nolly Meekum, and mailed from a little town in Texas:

"My Dear Mr. Johnson:—Your curiosity is very laudable, and I trust in this case applicable, but I have a brother whom I regret to state must positively take a fishing trip by the doctor's orders, for the benefit of his health, otherwise he will soon die. Now here comes the troublesome part of the whole business. My brother, who used to chew tobacco, now eats it; in place of the former slow process of imbibing liquor from a drinking glass, he now employs a funnel; and his profanity is such that the intensity of his expletives often en-

dangers thoracic apoplexy; and I am sorely afraid that if the arch enemy of mankind ever finds him in the woods all alone, without the intervening protection of some Christian person capable of averting such a calamity by powerful prayer, he would never return alive.

“Yours very truly,

“NOLLY MEEKUM, T. D.”

I wrote back to Mr. Meekum and respectfully declined to consider his proposal, at the same time stating that although I sympathized with him I was afraid if the gentleman he referred to was to find his brother and myself alone together in the woods, the said gentleman might make a mistake and take the wrong one, and I did not care to take any chances.

My oldest fishing friend, George Barker, possesses a lean, crafty-looking nondescript dog, and one day this Summer, when we were about to start on a fishing trip together on Round Lake, George pleaded so hard for the dog to come that I weakly consented. The dog's name was Tiddler, and a worse canine abomination I do not believe ever lived. He showed at once by his attitude he considered me an individual antagonistic to his master, and as such to be carefully looked after, and it was only after an amount of pummeling and licking on the part of George sufficient to have laid any respectable dog cold, that he could be persuaded I was neither a bone nor a dog biscuit imported for his special delectation.

We were on the lake three hours, and they were three of the weariest hours I ever spent in my life. The capture of our first pickerel—a fish of about seven pounds in weight—caused such a manifestation of inquisitive interest in Tiddler, that his long, lank nozzle was well into the pickerel's smiling countenance before we could prevent it, and then the frightful, unearthly ki-kowing which followed was only ended by Tiddler in desperation jumping into the lake, carrying the pickerel with him. The fish on feeling the water relaxed his hold immediately, and Tiddler—all

dripping wet—was assisted by his master into the boat again.

By the vindictive leer with which Tiddler favored me when he made his reappearance, I could plainly see he blamed me for the whole occurrence. Shortly afterward I caught an immense perch, and Tiddler—who had been cogitating on the advisability of a nap after his bath—thumped himself bodily down on the perch just as that fish was erecting the bristling spikes of his dorsal fin in indignation at being so unceremoniously hauled from his native element. That time Tiddler got it literally in the neck, and a second edition of agonizing ki-kowing, variegated by howls and garnished by canine cursing, followed, until a fisherman on the shore a mile distant protested at our apparent cruelty.

In fact, I never saw another dog who possessed the remarkable faculty of getting into trouble that Tiddler did. He was seasick, or rather lake sick, and no sooner had his stomach recovered its proper equilibrium than he was in hot water again. In fact, such a nuisance did he become that we were obliged to leave off fishing and adjourn to the shore.

Round Lake is a splendid piece of fishing water, and is located about two miles from Gray's Lake Depot, on the Wisconsin Central. Minnows are the best all-round bait which can be used. These the angler should provide, as the supply on the ground is uncertain.

Starting from Sam Litwilder's boathouse, the best plan is to row directly to the bass ground marked on the southeast point, working well in-shore among the rushes, and if unsuccessful there then try the bass weeds further out, and thence to the bass pocket on the southwest corner just inside the point. The other two bass pockets on the west shore should then be visited, and unless some success has been met with at this stage the angler may feel certain that the bass are lying in the deeper water; and he cannot do better than to take the lake all around, fishing in the deeper

water on the extreme edges of the bass weeds. While fishing in this manner he should row up against the wind, and then drift back over the ground. In fact, on every occasion that offers, work over your fishing water with the aid of the wind, if possible, for it is the sculls—clumsily manipulated in the water—which account in many instances for the sparseness of an angler's catch.

The best pickerel ground is just off the east side of the sandbar adjoining the deep water. There is also excellent trolling ground for pickerel on the edges of the bass weeds on the western side, and my own experience has proved that on this ground a spoon is preferable during that period of the season when the water is clearing from the annual visitation of algæ.

There is one particular fish of which the pot-fisherman, with his heavy rough tackle, thick pole and inartistic method of using it, can almost claim a monopoly in its capture, and that is the big pickerel. It is generally the fellow with a big bob and a strong line that catches these big fellows. Let a man anchor a boat in a fairly deepish stretch of weedy-bottomed water, and dangle a big lively chub in close proximity and patiently wait, and it is only a question of time until his pickerelship will come along and grab it. Then there is no waiting, for directly the big bob disappears the rod is seized, and before the astonished fish is aware of what has happened he is yanked, "*nolens volens*," into the boat.

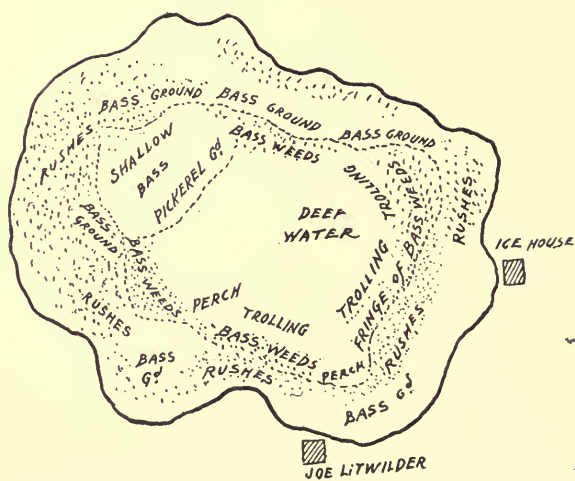
This kind of angling is too tame for the man with any true bred angling instinct. He cannot bring his mind to such coarse and summary methods. He uses a fine line, a light casting rod, and endeavors to supply the lack of strength in his tackle with skill in its use; but all the skill in the world is inadequate to cope with a large, powerful fish and a weedy bottom, hence although he may have a number of strikes from large pickerel during the season he rarely brings one to the landing-net.

It is a noticeable fact that large pickerel are gener-

ally hooked in a very slight manner, often disengaging the hooks of their own accord after being caught. They are not hooked sufficiently secure to allow of the long battle which light tackle necessitates. But the same fish, under the same circumstances, if pulled in right away before he has had an opportunity to weaken the hold of the hook, can often be saved; and this is the primary reason why the pot-fisherman gets the big pickerel. In fact, it is a humiliating point to concede, but the fact remains that in order to angle for large pickerel with any success a man must resort to pot-fishing with a big bob and thick line, or else troll with a large spoon.

Trolling is a kind of middle course between pot-fishing and scientific angling. It is an invariable apprenticeship with which all novices begin their angling career, and is the only method by which an inexperienced fisherman can hope to make a catch. In deepish water such as is suitable for trolling, a fish takes little notice of the boat as it passes over him, and the spoon trolling far behind the wake of the boat, deep down in the water and within easy striking distance, is very alluring; again in trolling the bait is working for the angler all the time.

TAYLOR'S LAKE.



TAYLOR'S LAKE

CHAPTER XIII.

TAYLOR'S LAKE. A LEGEND OF LIMBURGER CHEESE.

Somebody remarked to me last week that it was a pity the carp had never been introduced into the lakes of Northern Wisconsin, as they would have effectually kept the weeds under. There is no doubt the carp would soon destroy the immense weed beds, but this, instead of being a blessing, would be an unmitigated misfortune to the angler. It is the presence of the weeds which give the fishes cover, allowing the smaller ones chances to keep out of the way of their ravenous and larger relations, and mature. In fact, it is scarcely possible to fish out a weedy lake of any respectable size. Half the large fishes an angler hooks are rarely landed, the weeds and light tackle proving too many chances in their favor. Again, at certain times of the year, the fishes feed partially on the decayed vegetation, and at such times are not nearly so eager for the angler's bait.

Speaking of carp reminds me of Limburger cheese. Once I asked a Dutchman the question: "Who discovered Limburger cheese?" He told me it was a relic of barbarism incidental to that period when mankind were so intensely phlegmatic and apathetically dispositioned that it necessitated a joint appeal, to both their noses and palates, ere their gastromonic faculties could positively recognize a good thing when it was placed before them. I have since ascertained that Limburger cheese was first produced in the following manner:

Away back in those extremely primeval times before the Dutch nation first commenced to keep history, there lived in an old antiquated castle on the banks of the Rhine one Klotz Himmell by name; an individual

who owned the best part of the surrounding country, kept a host of clamorous fighting retainers, observed no laws or religion except those of his own making, and passed his time in eating, drinking and carousing when he felt good and merry, and in kicking his retainers when he happened to be morose and mean. After many years spent in this manner, old Klotz's appetite began to fail him; his palate refused to recognize the piquant flavor of those former delicacies of which he had previously been so fond. Sauerkraut no longer, as of yore, tickled his palate with its delicious acidity; the huge blood puddings on which he had been wont to gorge with unpalled appreciation of their lusciousness, became but tasteless matter in his mouth; in fact, to briefly summarize, the old chap no longer enjoyed his victuals.

Just about this time things began to get extremely unpleasant; for, owing to his fretfulness and irritability, Klotz was a misery to himself, and a holy terror to all around him. He was stone deaf, partially blind, his sense of smell was all but gone. Things had come to such a pass that instead of eating four square meals a day in his spacious banqueting hall he scarcely ate four meals a month, and then only a little bowl of mush and milk in his daughter's private boudoir, situated in a tiny turret stuck away up on a remote point of the castle. This daughter's name was Mary Anne, at least that is the nearest approach to Americanism that I can translate from the old manuscript before me.

Now, Mary Anne was an extremely good and pretty girl, doting on her old father, and distractedly fond of a good-looking young serf, who used occasionally to call at the backdoor of the castle to peddle fish and bananas; his name was Lym. The maidenly curves of pretty little Mary Anne, when she had some three months previously appeared at the back door of the castle in her morning wrapper with the intention of cheapening a big carp, had settled Lym's hash at first

sight, although both of them were aware their mutual appreciation was hopeless, owing to the fact that society—which was just as severe and hard in those primeval times as now—forbade a maid of high degree to wed any suitor below the rank of a burgher.

The old man grew rapidly worse, dozens of physicians attended him night and day, and one afternoon—after a consultation of six hours' duration—they announced to the weeping Mary Anne that unless some delicacy of marvelous epicurean choiceness could be found, with which to tempt the old man's appetite, he would certainly starve to death. That evening Mary Anne met her lover in the little copse just outside the castle gate, and distractedly weeping huge, two-carat tears upon the bosom of his leather jerkin pictured to the sympathetic Lym her poor Pa's sad plight.

Now Lym was a youth of quick parts, and ingenious faculties; so, bidding Mary Anne cheer up, he made her promise to meet him at the same spot the next evening. Lym went home, and while restlessly tossing on his hard pallet that night, his mind tortured by the sorrows of his sweet little mistress, his big toe struck against something hard at the foot of the bed. Getting up he struck a light, and discovered a small parcel lying on the floor of his hut, which evidently had been dislodged by his toe a few moments before. He picked it up, and after unwrapping it found a small piece of cheese, which he recognized as the contents of a small package he had hooked up when fishing for carp in the adjoining lake some five years previously, had tucked it into the foot of his bed for safe keeping and then had forgotten all about it. Lym took it up carelessly and commenced to turn it in his warm hand. The cheese began to emit a faint, cheesy odor, which gradually increased in strength until Lym was obliged to open the window. The longer Lym handled the cheese the stronger it became, until at last, through sheer inability to stand its pungent odor any longer, he clapped his fingers to his nose and held it tight. Now whether a

morsel of the cheese from Lym's fingers found its way into his mouth, or whether the odor was so strong that it materialized on his tongue, I am unable to state, but certain it is Lym distinctly tasted the flavor of the cheese, and found it so marvelously delicious that it was a difficult matter to prevent himself from gobbling it all up right away. Suddenly an idea struck him: Surely, this would be the very thing to recuperate old Klotz's worn-out palate. Lym wrapped the cheese in at least twenty covers of cloth and delivered it to Mary Anne the next night, with directions to open it only in the presence of her father.

That night the old man had been taken down into the big banqueting hall, to bid his old retainers and henchmen good-bye, and thither Mary Anne hurried. Pushing everybody on one side she hurried to her father's couch, and placing the package on the small table by his side, commenced to tear off the wrappings. With the removal of each successive layer the retainers edged nearer to the doors and windows, while the glassy look in old Klotz's eyes gradually gave way to one of interest, followed by his presently sitting up and sniffing the air with inquisitive curiosity such as he had not shown for months past. With the removal of the last wrapper the cheese stood discovered, and simultaneously with its appearance an odor so weirdly unearthly and diabolically pungent arose that it could be seen like a pale wreath of blue smoke to circulate slowly until it filled the room, its fumes becoming so overpowering that everybody excepting old Klotz and Mary Anne incontinently fled by the nearest exit they could find.

The odor apparently inspired old Klotz with new life, for starting up from his couch he seized the cheese and devoured it with an avidity and relish to which he had been long a stranger, begged for more, kicked off the bed clothes, commenced to dress himself, and assured his daughter that the individual who had discovered such a marvelously savory compound could have any-

thing he wanted for the asking. Mary Anne, who was a sharp-witted girl, immediately beckoned to her lover—who had been watching the whole proceedings through the crack of the door—and together the young couple plumped upon their knees before the old man, asking him to ennoble Lym with the title of Burgher and allow them to start housekeeping without further loss of time. The old man, tweaking Lym's nose twice (the usual method of conferring the patent of nobility in those days), addressed him as Lym the Burgher, thus forever emancipating him from his serfdom and raising him to the rank of a Burgher. Lym the Burgher, as he was now called, started a cheese factory as soon as he was comfortably married; the cheese was named after him and called Lym-the-Burgher cheese, which after many years was shortened into the present method of pronouncing it, and called Limburger cheese.

I should have remained silent on the above history, but, as so few persons are aware that Limburger cheese owes its origin to a humble fisherman, I felt it my duty to the members of the angling fraternity to enlighten them.

Taylor's Lake is located one mile and a half from Gray's Lake Depot on the Wisconsin Central Line. The fishing is fairly good at times, but never anything extra. There is a prevailing opinion that this lake is netted, among most of the anglers with whom I have spoken; whether this is true, I am unable to positively state, but certain it is that the fishing has ceased to be anything like it was six or seven years ago. In fact, Taylor's Lake has not held its own as the other lakes in the vicinity have done. The use of set lines may have something to do with it.

There is excellent bass ground on the shore just east of Joe Litwilder's house. The best pickerel ground is just off the shallow, in the northwestern portion of the lake, during the warmer months, and outside the fringe of bass weeds on the eastern shore during the

colder months. All along the northern shore is good bass ground, particularly early and late in the season.

CHAPTER XIV.

GRAY'S LAKE. MY FIRST AND LAST EXPERIENCE IN RANCHING.

Once I became so enamored of a ranchman's life that I took up a quarter section of land in Cowlitz County, Washington, and commenced to ranch. After getting a large log house built and comfortably settled, I turned my attention to getting stock. When I state that my sole knowledge of farming had been derived from a previous Winter's evening deep study of the American Farmer, it will be at once understood how fitted I was for the occupation I had chosen.

My first purchase was a hornless cow, a muley they called her. I bought her in a small town at eight o'clock in the morning, nine miles away from home; and, owing to the fact that I was unable to remove or silence the cow bell that she wore, I arrived home at nine in the evening, after literally dragging and pulling my unwilling purchase the whole of the way with an admiring and curious crowd of about five hundred other people's cows following.

Three cows that happened to be there at the time I made my start manifested such an intense interest in the probable fate of my newly bought cow that they persisted in following her. I stopped and attempted to shoo them off, but beyond showing an air of mild surprise they refused to leave us. About half a mile further down the road we came across a herd of about a dozen more cows, and these animals—apparently quite as a matter of course—waited patiently until I had dragged my muley sufficiently far ahead, and then placidly dropped in our wake and duly followed on. At a turn in the road three young bulls joined our party, and within the next two miles the everlasting

tinkle of the cow bell on my new purchase had gathered in quite two hundred more cows, of all ages, sexes, sizes and colors, that joined the procession. I thought I had never seen so many cows together in all my life, and grew cold when I cogitated upon the probable consequences of the wholesale cow abduction of which I was unwittingly guilty. For seven miles the addition to our ranks steadily increased; apparently, every cow for miles around pricked up its ears on hearing the penetrating tinkle of that cursed little brass cow bell and forsook home, parents and everything else to join us. Honestly speaking, I believe there was enough beef in our wake to have furnished the whole city of Chicago with meat for a week.

Occasionally my cow would sturdily plant her fore-legs together, lower her head and imperatively refuse to be pulled an inch farther; at the same time emitting a plaintive, lowering protest. On hearing this every other cow in the procession would stop, too, and bellow a commiserating and sympathetic chorus. In fact, the scene reminded me of a policemen escorting a juvenile offender to the village lockup, followed by a crowd of sympathizing friends and relations.

However, at last I reached home and for the next two days was kept busy apologizing to the numerous neighboring farmers who came and took their cattle away. They all took it good naturedly, however, and said that the old man Boulder, of whom I had bought the cow, had put up a job on me with the bell.

Mrs. J— spent the whole of the next two days in learning to milk. At the end of that time she came in to me, and sidling up asked me in a confidential manner if I knew how many teats a cow ought to have. This question fairly staggered me, and I frankly owned up that I hadn't the least idea.

"Well," she remarked, "our cow has only got two; suppose you go down to the village, and without letting anyone see you look at some of the other folks' cattle and see how many they have."

I did so at once, and returned with the overwhelming intelligence that every cow I had seen had, unmistakably, four well-developed milking appendages.

I felt I had been shamefully imposed upon and



GRAYS LAKE

angrily started down to old Boulder's house to interview him on the subject.

"Waal, waal, ef it h'ain't Mr. Johnson," he said, as he opened the door. "Come right in! Come right in and sit down! I was just a-telling' Marthy (his wife) to put up a bushel of Fall apples and send over to you;

we allus like to be kind of peart and neighborly to newcomers."

"Only two tits," he exclaimed, after I had told my grievance, "why, sartin; Jim ripped her bag with a pitchfork when he licked her last Summer, and her two back tits shriveled up. But that don't matter, anyhow; you know when a man goes blind of one eye he kin see doubly as well with the one that's left, and it's just the same with a cow's tit, all the milk goes to the one that's left, and she młks just as much. Why, Lor bless your soul, Mr. Johnson, I actually consider a one-titted cow a most valuable animal, for cows' tits are allers a-getting' cracked and sore and whar thars only two thar ain't so many to bother her."

The above is a fair sample of my experience in ranching. If I bought a horse it was some worthless old animal, possessing every ailment and blemish that it could possibly have and yet live. In fact, the whole of the community, for miles around, apparently considered I had been placed there by a beneficent Providence for their especial benefit. I got tired of it, at last; and, appreciating the fact that I didn't understand the farming business to pursue it profitably, gave everything away I had because everyone in the county hadn't a dollar to buy with, and came back East.

Gray's Lake is reached by the Gray's Lake Depot on the Wisconsin Central Line. The lake is located a short distance west of the depot. It contains some fairly good fishing grounds. The best bait-casting water is on the northeastern shore, just where the weeds and rushes meet. The trolling ground is on the northwestern portion, thence south in the deepish water just outside the fringe of bass weeds.

Gray's Lake has many admirers and I know many anglers that have steadily fished it for years who prefer it to any of the others, but these form part of a clique who habitually visit it more from the old associations it embraces than from any points of excellence the lake possesses.

I recollect a party of Chicago fishermen who once fished it on a wager. They paired off in couples, two in each boat, with the understanding that the two who lost were to pay for a supper. The rule was, pickerel and bass only to count, and nothing under a pound weight in bass and three pounds in pickerel. I was with one couple during their catch, and noticed that each fish caught was weighed immediately on a small steel pocket balance they carried, and if deficient a few ounces only it was stuffed with a little mud and weeds until it would pass muster.

This discrepancy in weight reminded me of Dan'l Bruce, an old ante-bellum ducky of Missouri. Dan used to spend his time fishing for catfish, and one day after having imbibed as much "bust-head" as the saloon-keeper would trust him with went to the creek and caught a thirty-pound catfish the first cast of his line. Daniel took out an antiquated steelyard which he always carried and weighed it. To Dan's joy it just turned the scale at thirty pounds.

"Lor' bress my soul," he ejaculated, almost turning a somersault in his delight; "no more work for dis haar nigger for a month." So overpowered was he, with the joint effects of the liquor he had previously swallowed and his big catch, he lay down and went to sleep soundly on the grass.

Another ducky who had been fishing, unobserved by Daniel, in a small reed brake about two hundred yards up the stream, had watched Dan make his catch and had seen him weigh it. This ducky also had caught a small catfish weighing just a pound. He patiently waited till Dan was fast in dreamland, and then quietly sneaking up substituted his own fish for the large one lying on the grass beside the slumbering Daniel and made off.

After a while Daniel awoke, and gazing around the first object that met his eyes was the insignificant little catfish his neighbor had left. He arose to his feet slowly, with his eyes bulging out like saucers, and

taking the fish in his hand he gazed at it long and fearfully, muttering to himself:

"Før de Lawd's sake! fore de Lawds, dat shore am a cat! But Lawd a massy how he am shrunk; shorely, when I weighed dat ar cat afore, dar mus' hab ben one poun' ob fish an' twenty-nine poun's ob whisky."

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CHAPTER XV.

CHANNEL LAKE. LAKE CATHERINE. LOON LAKE.

LOCATING STRANGE WATERS. HOW AND

WHEN TO STRIKE A FISH.

Channel Lake and Lake Catherine are located directly north of Lake Marie, with which they communicate by a channel, and are also connected by another waterway. They are reached by the Antioch Depot on the Wisconsin Central Line. The distance from Chicago is a trifle over fifty-five miles. In both of these lakes excellent bass and pickerel fishing is to be had, though the really good fishing ground in Channel Lake is somewhat limited, the east shore being the best fishing water. In Lake Catherine the best bass ground is at the southern point, and for both bass and pickerel on either side of the channel on the west side of the lake. There is also some wall-eyed pike ground in deeper water at the south end, as shown on the map. So many anglers have asked me the quickest method of locating the best fishing grounds in strange waters, that I think it would be a good idea to give a general description of a typical piece of water, naming those general divisions and bottom formations which are to be found in all lakes. With few exceptions all lakes possess the following features:

First, a rush line extending from the shore line some distance within the lake, dotted here and there with lily pads at some points close within shore. Secondly, bass and pickerel weeds, just outside the rush line and adjoining it; and thirdly, the deeper water which lies immediately beyond the bass and pickerel weeds. This deeper water usually marks the termination of what-

ever bars there may be in the lake. Fourthly, the main body of the lake and deepest portions of all.

Bass and pickerel alternate between the deepish water adjoining the main body and the lilypads on the margin, according to the variations of the weather, or, in other words, according to the existing conditions of heat and cold. The colder the weather, the deeper the water the fishes will seek in which to lie, and as the temperature warms the fishes seek the shallow portions of a lake. On an extremely hot day bass will crowd into the shallow, muddy bottoms at the roots of the lilypads and refuse all bait. On such occasions, if a bait is cast near them it will cause them to vacate the spot in a manner which shows them to be scared. They are not in a feeding humor and are easily frightened by any disturbance in their vicinity; but, as soon as the heat of the day is over and evening draws near, the bass forsake the lilypads for the feeding grounds adjoining. On chilly days the bass lie in the rush patches, bass weeds and deepish water adjoining. While lying in such places they may be enticed often with a bait, and will seize it provided too much exertion is not required to do so, even when not in a feeding humor. From these situations, as evening approaches and the wind goes down, they seek the nearest shallow frequented by small fry and there feed.

With all predatory fishes the two principal requisites are a lay-by or resting place and a feeding ground. In a lake these two places are close together, because fishes that inhabit bodies of still water are local in their habits and do not roam from one point to another any very great distance, as do those who inhabit running water.

The minnows and small fry upon which bass and pickerel feed are to be found in greater numbers in those shallow portions of the water between the outside shore line and the bass weeds immediately adjoining the rush line, and this portion of the lake is

the general feeding ground for whatever perch and pickerel it may contain; while the bass weeds and deepish water immediately adjoining or the rush and lily pads on the margin is their lay-by or resting place, according to the existing climatic influences.

The best way to fish a strange lake is to make directly for the nearest sparsely dotted patch of rushes

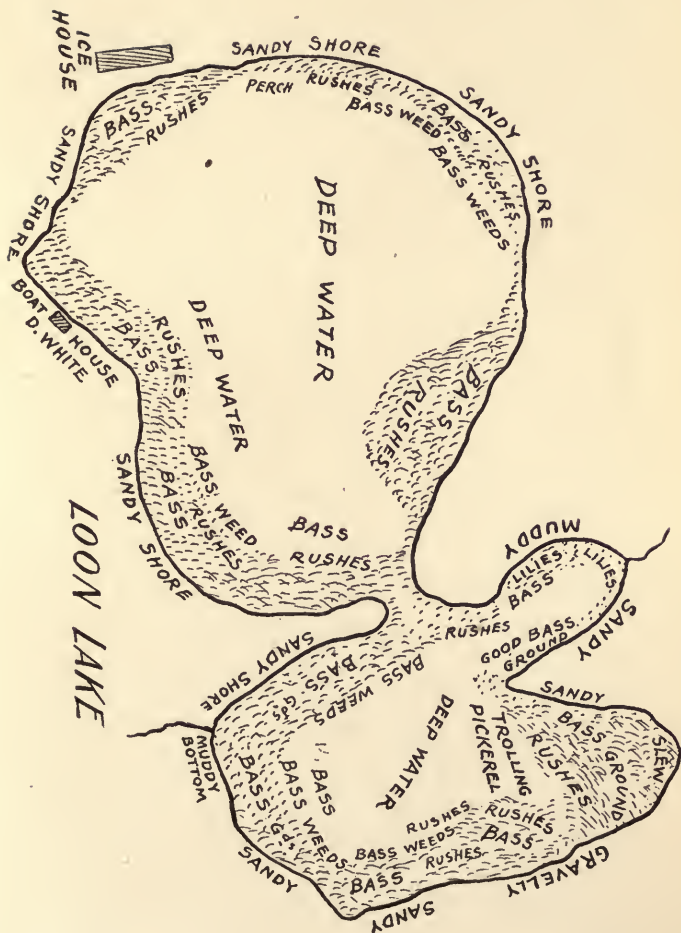


and examine the bottom; if it shows a depth of water from two to five feet, and a good, thick undergrowth of weeds sufficiently high to allow a bass to sink into it and be covered, the angler may go to work on such ground with confidence. Bass have a particular affection for this kind of ground, and even under the most adverse circumstances of wind or weather ground of this description generally will yield something to persistent fishing.

Knowing when and how to strike a fish is an important factor in angling. A pickerel seizes a bait crosswise and hardly ever shifts it from that position in his mouth until he has reached a spot in which to devour it. The fisherman will feel the strike when a pickerel seizes his bait. This will be followed by a short or long run, according to the size of the fish and the distance his inclination may lead him to travel before stopping to swallow it. Never strike a fish on its first run unless there is some special reason for doing so, nor allow him to feel the slightest check when running off with the bait; but when the fish, after resting, again goes off, tighten the line, and immediately the tension shows a direct communication with the fish without any intervening slack the rod should be thrown smartly back with sufficient force to drive the hooks home. Always wait until a fish is going away from you before striking; never attempt it when he is coming toward you. You may hook him in this position, but in nine cases out of ten it will be done so insecurely that he will tear away.

A bass seizes a minnow by the head and a frog by the legs, and when in a feeding humor swallows the bait as he moves away; he does not wait to find some suitable place in which to swallow his prey like the pickerel does, but feeds as he swims. But a bass, when not over hungry, will often seize a bait and hold it in his mouth for a considerable length of time and then reject it. This can be obviated, to a certain extent, by using two hooks, one in the head of the bait and the other in the tail, and striking directly the bass seizes the bait. With this exception, always give a bass a little time and allow him to go off with the bait some trifling distance before striking.

An experienced fisherman can generally form a fairly correct idea of the kind of fish which strikes at his bait. If in shallow water it is necessarily drawn near the surface, and the rise of the fish is sufficiently visible to enable a pretty correct guess to be made, and



in deepish water where the rise and strike of the fish are not visible on the surface, the sharp, business-like double snap of a large bass is easily distinguished from that of the steady, sweeping clutch which attends the bite of a large pickerel. It is not so easy to distinguish between the bites of the smaller bass and pickerel; they both seize the bait with a sharp, worrying movement similar to that of a large perch.

The bait-caster really requires two kinds of casting rods, one for weedy waters and another for those waters which contain but few weeds. A six-foot six-inch casting rod, not exceeding seven ounces in weight, is an excellent all-round tool for river fishing and in those lakes where heavy surface vegetation is not encountered. But such a rod, if used in many of the lakes described in these articles, would soon come to grief; in fact, a stiffer and slightly heavier rod, with plenty of backbone, is an absolute necessity, because the angler to get fish must fish not only in the immediate vicinity of the weed beds but often in the weed beds themselves. I am aware there are many really good fisherman who decry this style of fishing, in fact, I am sure if everyone had their choice they would much prefer to fish in open water. But if the fishes are in the weeds and rushes what can you do? You have either got to go for them in the weeds or catch nothing.

Loon Lake is reached from Loon Lake Depot. There is good bass fishing all around the eastern portion, particularly during the latter end of the season, when the fishes will be found to frequent the outer fringe of bass weeds more than the rushes inshore. The deepish water, all around the western shore, is good fishing water at all times.

CHAPTER XVI.

FOX LAKE. PETITE LAKE. OBSERVATIONS ON SKITTERING AND BAIT-CASTING.

Fox Lake is reached from the Lake Villa Depot on the Wisconsin Central Line. It is fifty miles from Chicago, and although plentifully stocked with pickerel and bass is the most difficult lake of any in which to make a good catch. There are a few old-time fishermen who occasionally make good catches by skittering and trolling, but for the average bait-caster who possesses no special knowledge of the ground the outlook for a good catch is not very encouraging. If a man is content to engage a boat and the services of one of the several experienced guides who live in the neighborhood, to row him cautiously within reach of the best pieces of water, and will skitter a minnow or a spoon with a long bamboo pole, yanking the fish into the boat without play or sport, such an individual—providing he strikes a favorable time—can often make a big catch.

The lake teems with natural food of every description, and this is probably one of the chief reasons the fish do not feed readily. Although the lake contains some magnificent bass and pickerel ground, as far as appearances go, little of it is worth fishing. The space of really good fishing water, for such a large area as that which Fox Lake contains, is extremely small.

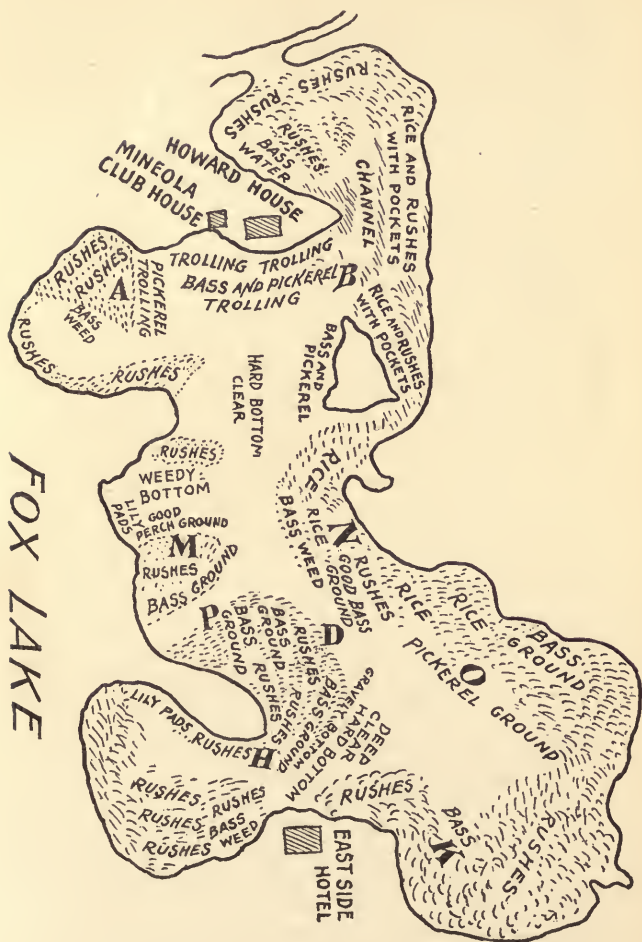
Starting from the Eastside Hotel, the best thing to do is to row directly to the spot marked H on the chart. The best bass ground in the whole lake is that embraced within the triangle formed by the letters P, D and H, directly facing the Eastside Hotel. The bottom of this portion of the lake is all that could be desired, rush patches with bass weed and a heavy ground growth of silk weed. This piece of water contains sev-

eral fine, deep pockets. There is enough good water in this space to occupy a bait-caster a half day if he fishes it as it should be fished. With a trifling breeze he can drift over the ground and fish it thoroughly, the rushes being just thick enough to delay the drift of the boat sufficiently to allow thorough combing of the ground.

Proceeding north from the point marked P on the map, an open space free from rushes and weeds is crossed until the rushes are again reached at the point marked M. This is fine perch ground, and when the fishes are feeding a man can easily catch a hundred of these gamy little fellows in a very short space of time. They run in schools of about a couple of dozen to fifty, and providing the angler is careful and draws his fishes in as quickly and quietly as possible, he can catch half the school before the rest take the alarm and go off.

The next point worth visiting is the rush bed at A, in the northwest bay. There is good pickerel water here, and large fishes are frequently taken just outside the fringe of rushes running north and south. From the point marked A to the channel at B is good trolling ground, following the shore around about two hundred yards out. A man who likes still fishing can probably do as well among the bass if he should anchor out in the deepish water about two hundred yards, directly opposite the Howard House. On the west side of the island lies good bass and pickerel ground. From the island, coming south, the next point of excellence is the spot marked Z. This is fairly good bass water, but the fishes appear to run small. There is good pickerel water at the point marked O, and fairly good bass ground at the point marked K, in the bay east of the Eastside Hotel.

The fishing in all these grounds is very erratic. Some days the best pieces of water, or those that are generally considered the best, will prove a blank, and other portions which are considered poor fishing will reward the angler with a big catch of fish. The best thing the



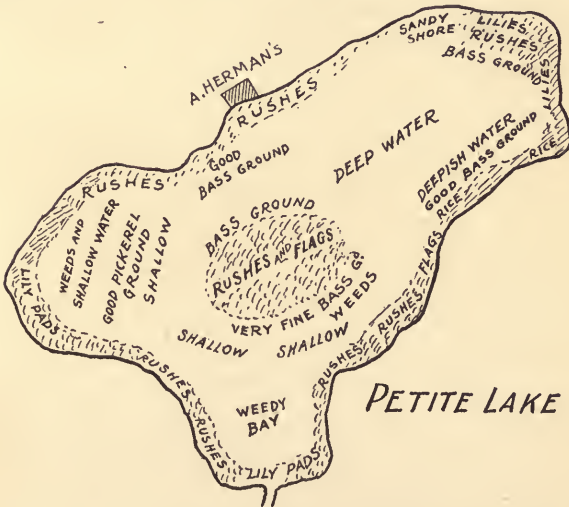
fisherman can do is to try all the grounds in turn, or at least as many as his time will permit. Sticking to a piece of water in the face of non-success, just because at some previous time a good catch of fish was taken there, is only a waste of time. If you don't find the fishes willing to take your bait in one supposed good fishing spot, move around to the next and keep on moving until you find a piece of water where they are feeding. In any large body of water like that contained in most of the lakes I have described, there is generally some particular portion more favored than the rest and in which a few fishes will be found to respond to the angler's attentive persistence.

One day this Summer, while casting on Fox Lake, I came across a boat in which were two persons. One was a gentleman whom I recognized as a well-known Chicago business man; the other was an old boatman who has fished the lakes for many years. The gentleman was skittering with a minnow, the boatman rowing, and although I have my own private opinion regarding skittering, yet, after watching the method pursued, it was impossible to avoid admiring the artistic manner and the amount of positive science displayed by the boatman when placing his patron within reach of the weed bed they were skirting. The sculls were moved with scarcely a perceptible motion, most of the rowing being done from that side farthest from the weed bed. Each time the angler would cast his bait among the weeds and rushes, the sculls were suffered to remain perfectly stationary during the whole of the time the bait was in the water; and what progress was made in shifting the ground was done between the casts, yet so delicately and skillfully that, with the slightest ripple to assist the boatman, it was possible to fish within ten yards of the boat without scaring away the fish.

I recognized at once how it was possible to make the big catches of fish which are so often taken by skittering. The bait was working almost all the time. Each

spot of water could be thoroughly searched, and what was more important still there was no necessity to hurry the bait through the water. I can quite understand a man who has fished in this manner for any length of time being unwilling to give up the skittering style of fishing and take up with the practice of bait-casting.

The art of bait-casting is becoming better known and appreciated every year. Eight years ago the number of



bait-casters that could be seen on the lakes were few, but now one cannot help noticing that the bait-casters form a large majority of those who leave each Saturday on the Wisconsin Central for the lakes of Northern Illinois. There are two things required in catching fish. First, to know where to look for them, and then to place the bait before the fishes without letting them suspect that you are at the other end of the line; and there is no method which accomplishes the latter so well as the bait-casting rod.

Petite Lake is reached from the Antioch Depot on the Wisconsin Central. The rush line is comparatively scant. The best bass ground is found around the rush and flag patch in the point marked on the chart. The best pickerel ground is just outside the weeds, on the shallow portion, on the western shore. For evening fishing with frogs the lilypads in the northeastern point is the best ground of any. Petite Lake is fairly good fishing water, and during the season has its fair share of angling visitors. There are plenty of good boats to be had, and experienced boatmen who know the water thoroughly will accompany the fisherman at a reasonable charge.



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